‘Playing’ Cultural Identities

In and Out of the Cinematic Nation

Popular Songs in

British, Spanish, and Italian Cinema of the Late 1990s

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ABSTRACT

The questions I set out to address in the thesis originate at the point where film music scholarship on identifications via popular songs and film scholarship on the necessity to *look* beyond national identity in cinema, intersect. By analysing the processes through which popular songs bring meaning into films, and focussing on how their meaning and other textual factors intersect in the film, I argue that soundtracks construct identities that are not uncovered through considerations of films as visual texts.

To explore these processes, I chose to focus on films from three European national cinemas – British, Spanish, and Italian – and show how considering popular songs can reveal the paths audiences tread when they not only see but also hear the differences soundtracks construct in films. After situating my study in relation to the literature on film music studies and film studies, I discuss the concept of cultural identities used in the thesis and highlight its relevance to the study of films as audiovisual texts. In the nine case studies presented in the three central chapters, I illustrate how songs participate in the construction and positioning of cultural identities in films. Via connections between different musical groupings and the cultural identities these articulate, songs can acquire further meaning, which often changes during the course of the films and can situate cultural identities in relation to the cinematic representations of a dominant national culture.

The possibilities for identifications offered through popular music in films are being explored in interesting ways in the field of film music studies. By applying these theorists' ideas to British, Spanish, and Italian films, I propose to show the readings that a consideration of films as visual texts alone does not account for. In addition to illustrating how an audiovisual approach to films can inform other neighbouring disciplines, I build on existing ideas in film music studies and propose a basic model for understanding how songs can map cultural identities in the cinematic representation of nations as well as be influenced by their textual voyages through films. In this project, I ultimately aim to argue for the necessity to *listen* beyond national identity in order to understand where these narratives allow audiences to situate themselves in relation to the nations they inhabit.

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OPENING CREDITS

I started recording soundtracks off the TV speakers through a boombox before knowing I could one day write about those songs and their narrative functions, and I started finding the films I now write about interesting before knowing why. Just as *Radiofreccia*'s internal audience members could at last hear their musical culture on the free radio station that they founded, I could hear and see the sound of a world close to me in *Radiofreccia*. As a young Italian who liked a lot of 'foreign' music and had not known the feeling one experiences in front of a familiar audiovisual account of one's culture, *Radiofreccia* was among the first few films that ticked all the right boxes. Not only did Freccia, Bruno and their friends have several beliefs and ideas I could share, but also their world sounded vaguely like mine. After obtaining a place on the MA Popular Music Studies at the University of Liverpool, I began discovering how films offer identifications through their soundtracks, and the concept for the present project gradually started to materialise. My earlier scholarly incarnation as a modern languages graduate gave me access to movies in English and Spanish as well as Italian, and realising how prominent the focus on national identity was in the discourse surrounding the cinemas of Britain, Spain, and Italy generated questions about whether I – and other filmgoers – could hear something other than just national identity. The questions I set out to address in the thesis originate at the point where film music scholarship on identifications via popular songs, and film scholarship on the necessity to *look* beyond national identity in cinema intersect. I started researching the topic in a quest to *listen* beyond national identity in cinema. I often found plurality and Otherness woven among the other narrative threads in the films I analyse, and sometimes unearthed further differences which, beneath their surface meaning, can point towards identifications I could not map using national identity as a compass.

I will now provide a brief outline of the thesis structure. In Chapter One, I will outline my trajectory through the literature relating to film music studies and film studies on which I build my project, introduce the films I discuss in Chapters Two, Three, and Four and their respective national contexts, and clarify a few questions about terminology. In Chapter Two, I will offer a contextualisation on the British cinematic landscape through current film scholarship about British cinema in

the 1990s and different authors' perspective on soundtracks. I will then propose a textual analysis of *Trainspotting* (1996), *The Full Monty* (1996), and *Twin Town* (1997), showing how, via connections between different musical groupings, on the one hand, and drugs, joblessness, and class divisions, on the other, songs can construct and situate different cultural identities among the cinematic representations of Britain. In Chapter Three, I will discuss scholarship about Spanish films where soundtracks enter the picture, considering how ideas about musical articulations of differences already surface in the writing about various Spanish films and their music, but are often unnoticed. I will then analyse *Historias del Kronen* (*Stories from the Kronen*, 1995), *Barrio* (1998), and *Krámpack* (*Nico and Dani*, 2000), considering how songs map different stances vis-à-vis patriarchal norms and society's margins in the audiovisual narrative these Spanish films construct. In Chapter Four, I will reflect on the few scholarly discussions of Italian films where music is addressed, drawing on these authors' ideas to develop my arguments about *Sono pazzo di Iris Blond* (*I'm Crazy About Iris Blond* or *Iris Blond*, 1995), *Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo* (*Jack Frusciante Left the Band*, 1996), and *Radiofreccia* (*Radio Arrow*, 1998). In these three films, popular songs construct troublesome females, teenagers who reject predetermined adulthood, and yesterday's disillusioned youth through the associative meaning the songs carry and acquire in the narrative, providing a different positioning for these groupings vis-à-vis the dominant culture their representatives inhabit. In Chapter Five, I will offer a few final reflections about how popular songs can construct different cultural identities in the films and situate these identities and their representatives vis-à-vis the dominant national culture and propose a basic model for understanding how these narrative processes occur. But first, I would like to reflect on where film music studies positions those who, like me, started writing about soundtracks in the young interdisciplinary landscape where musicology and film studies cross paths.

Let me introduce a simile to help clarify my point of view on the study of films. A film is like a river. Like a river a film has several tributaries that make it what it is. Like a river a film is shaped by and shapes the place through which it flows. Like a river a film can be looked at from either bank. Those who think about soundtracks stand on either one or the other bank of the river, either musicology or – less often – film studies. Where I stand affects how I see a film, how I hear a film.

Via popular music studies I started discovering film music studies, which more than a bank was a small island in the middle of the river. Here is where I started considering films. From here I address the inhabitants of the two banks. The aim of my thesis is to take them to the middle of the river of moving images, sound, and music where I stand, and not only tell them what I have seen, what I have heard so far, but also invite them to join me, if only temporarily, because I believe considering films as audiovisual media is still unfinished business. A wider scholarly consideration of films as audiovisual texts, as I shall argue in the following pages, can uncover a whole new dimension where soundtracks map paths for identifications leading outside the known territories of nations.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Films are fascinating textual *milieux* where different threads intersect, different audiences bring their own experiences and see a narrative world, refracted through the eyes of someone else. Or at least this is the film studies version of the story. As a matter of fact, audiences have been hearing a narrative world through the ears of someone else for as long as they have been seeing it through their eyes. Film was never really silent – as film music studies scholarship has extensively shown[1] – and today the increasing diversification of film music practices and the growing acknowledgement of the functions film music can perform calls for further investigation in those areas of the field for which there is not yet a map.

In the last two decades, the discipline of film studies has started to open up its ears to conceptualise the aural experiences of a century of filmgoing. After roughly two decades, predictably, there are still territories where shadows in scholarship intersect, leaving obscure areas, partial representations, and neglected questions. The aim of this thesis is to explore one of these obscure areas that film music studies has not yet reached, for a variety of reasons that I propose to reflect on in this introduction. I believe reviewing the development of film music studies since its early years is a necessary stage to establish which paths require further exploration and to understand which perspectives can allow for a fresh understanding of the aspects of the field I am going to investigate. Besides seeking to tread where film music studies has not yet trodden, another aim of this thesis is to start casting light on a perspective disregarded by film studies at large: the cultural identities proliferating inside and outside the borders of national cultural identities in feature films.

The comfort zones of film music studies are notorious: classical Hollywood, English-language films, great composers, the auteur tradition, etc. The objects of the present study are a selection of films outside these categories. I chose to concentrate on films attributed to Britain, Spain, and Italy made in the second half of the 1990s, in which popular music is present in the filmic narrative, but not including the film musical genre. In other words, films where popular music is aurally present in the film world and where there is a minimum level of engagement between the

[1] See, for example, Anderson T. (2003), Marks (1997), and Anderson G.B. (1988).

characters and music – for example, where the characters discuss, provide (by controlling various sources of music), and sometimes perform music in the film world. I chose to focus on films where music is extensively present in the filmic narrative because these films offer a greater variety of instances where the music articulates positions for different identifications and therefore represent fertile textual objects for a study about the relationship between popular songs and the construction of identities in contemporary cinema. However, the intersections between popular songs and cultural identities at the centre of this thesis are not exclusive to films where songs feature as prominently as in the films I analyse.

Cinematic texts are routinely defined through their nationality which, as a few cinema theorists argue (Higson 1989 and 2000, and O'Regan 2004), is extremely problematic. National cinema, often straightforwardly assumed to designate the films made in a given nation state, is a debated concept through which those who write about films can represent the cinematic landscape of a given country to reflect different approaches. In 'The Concept of National Cinema', Andrew Higson reviews four main ways of looking at a national cinema through an 'economic', 'text-based', 'exhibition-led or consumption-based', and 'criticism-led' approach (1989, pp. 36-37). Therefore, the concept of 'national cinema' could produce the following definitions: films made by a domestic film industry; films about a certain 'national' theme, sharing a style or a perspective, providing projections of a 'national' character; films watched by 'national' audiences; and quality art films of a given country. Discussions of national cinemas, as Higson makes clear, often see these definitions applied prescriptively rather than descriptively for the purpose of identifying a certain coherence and unity and producing a unique and stable identity. The 'imaginary coherence' of a national cinema is defined against another cinematic tradition or through:

> a more *inward-looking* [way of defining a national cinema] […], constituting a national cinema not so much in terms of its difference from other cinemas, but in terms of its relationship to an already existing national political, economic and cultural identity (in so far as a single coherent identity can be established) and set of traditions.
>
> (Higson 1989, p. 42)

The present project focuses on the relationships between films 'inwardly' classified as British, Spanish, and Italian cinemas[2] and approaches the cultural identities present in their respective national identities descriptively. Furthermore, it seeks to challenge the understanding of cinemas as 'national' through an audiovisual text-based perspective on films as culturally diverse formations. I shall elaborate on the notions of national cultural identities and other cultural identities in the following pages.

The transnational cultural dimension that both films and popular songs inhabit opens several interesting questions about whose culture these texts represent. Who answers these questions and how are matters nation-states and their institutional apparatuses still worry about. Ongoing debates about the concept of a national cinema confirm these preoccupations. In 'The Limiting Imagination of National Cinema', Andrew Higson (2000) discusses why Benedict Anderson's (1983) 'imagined community' argument:

> is not always sympathetic to what we might call the contingency or instability of the national. This is precisely because the nationalist project, in Anderson's terms, imagines the nation as limited, with finite and meaningful boundaries. The problem is that, when describing a national cinema, there is a tendency to focus only on those films that narrate the nation as just this finite, limited space, inhabited by a tightly coherent and unified community, closed off to other identities besides national identity. Or rather, the focus is on films that seem amenable to such an interpretation. The 'imagined community' argument thus sometimes seems unable to acknowledge the cultural difference and diversity that invariably marks both the inhabitants of a particular nation-state and the members of more geographically dispersed 'national' communities.
>
> (Higson 2000, p. 66)

The discourse surrounding films can overtly address their national identity, selectively focus on already canonised films without considering national identity, or offer a nationalising reading of films which allow it. Whichever way these unified

[2] While there are geo-politically defined nations (Scotland, Wales, Catalonia, etc.) within the nation-states I use for the purpose of classifying the films I study, I decided to classify films via the dominant nation-states through which these are defined as a reference framework because the films predominantly feature in scholarship about British, Spanish, and Italian cinemas. This in itself reflects how these are the dominant contexts where the non-dominant cultural identities I seek to explore in the thesis exist. However, where I refer to films bearing obvious connections to another nation within the dominant nation-state, I will consider each relevant national identity and their comparative dominance/non-dominance vis-à-vis the broader reference framework where scholarly discourse about these films has largely developed.

representations are constructed, the other cultural identities films can offer and how different audiences negotiate these through their identifications usually receive limited attention. The communities one can imagine participating in those media experiences constructed as national phenomena, as Higson argues, 'are rarely self-sufficient, stable or unified. They are much more likely to be contingent, complex, in part fragmented, in part overlapping with other senses of identity and belonging that have more to do with generation, gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, politics or style than with nationality.' (p. 66). These are the other identities often unaccounted for in the discourse through which films are constructed as the textual instances of a national cinema. The contingent, complex, fragmented 'communities' these other identities address are reduced to a unified community under the national flag through a selective inclusion. This process generally favours not only the senses of identity and belonging that have to do strictly with nationality, but also those identities defined along other lines which are inscribed as a dominant component of a national cultural identity – not necessarily through overt institutional support, but often through discourse.

An example Higson chooses among other significant national phenomena to think about communities coming together to experience nationally relevant media texts is *The Full Monty*, which one might argue attracted British audiences not just because of a sense of identity and belonging to Britain or England it might offer, but also for the emancipated women and the gay, jobless, and black men the film renders visible. These identities are, however, readily available for a nationalising reading. Emancipated women watch men strip, showing off British men and women's progressive gender politics, while the two gay men and the one black man represent Britain's diverse, multicultural society, and the enterprising jobless men happily strip their way out of unemployment, turning their initial cynical twist on the 'make-do' attitude into an optimistic 'can-do' attitude in what is easily romanticised as a 'quintessentially British' – and quite obviously Thatcherite – metamorphosis. These ideas fit the positive identity the British institutional apparatus tries to promote, which means British characters who potentially fit these representations are allowed a place in the cinematic imaginary of contemporary Britain. As I argue later, there are audiovisual aspects of *The Full Monty* which can undermine the caricatured reading I summarise above. While a nationalising reading aimed at showing *The Full*

Monty as affirmative image of Britishness would highlight the welcoming of a variety of non-dominant gender, sexual, class, and ethnic cultural identities in a cinematic account of contemporary Britain, considering *how* these identities are narratively constructed through the visuals and the music can produce different interpretations. All these non-dominant cultural identities (emancipated females, black, homosexual, jobless males) are the other side of a dominant cultural identity defined along similar lines (traditional females, white, heterosexual, employed males), but inscribed as a dominant component of a national cultural identity. While these are not ideas nation-states overtly support through their institutional apparatuses, these identities are often what lies below the manicured surface of a country's (inter)national cultural identity as they wish it to be seen – 'in theory', one might say – and represent another way of considering national cultural identities and their formation through discourse 'in practice'. These ideas about identities – whether 'in theory' or 'in practice' – and the realities beneath their representations never fully match. However, as I discuss later, the way different representations are constructed in relation to national cultural identity, whether 'in theory' or 'in practice', can greatly influence audiences' identifications.

The Full Monty's characters clearly allow a nationalising reading 'in theory', while 'in practice' those inclusive representations are not instances of a trend established in the broader cinematic discourse. But other characters present in the films I analyse are not exactly perfect ambassadors for their national cinemas and are not fitting for a nationalising reading. A young British man who regularly takes drugs and shuns consumerist society, a Spanish teenage boy going through his disadvantaged youth years without any obvious prospects, and young Italian men who start voicing their culture through their own free radio station; all these characters embrace a non-place-bound culture, a way of life of a given group (Williams 1983, p. 90) whose members inhabit their respective nations, often a culture their nations' cinematic imaginary fails to represent inclusively. While present in the nations where the films are set, these identities are not represented – neither 'in theory' nor 'in practice' – as a visible and audible component of their nations' cinematic imaginary. These are not only 'other' identities because their reference point is class or style and not nationality, but also 'Other' identities because the cinematic discourse their audiovisual representations produce and the

wider discourse about these representations often situate their members outside nations' cinematic imaginary.[3] Leaving certain non-dominant identities unrepresented or representing them as a 'foreign', irregular concept in the films made in a given country can produce a coherent, unified image of a national identity through cinematic discourse. Providing a nationalising reading of films or excluding films for which nationalising interpretations are not a possibility can construct a sense of homogeneity through the wider discourse critics and the scholarly community participate in. Considering audiovisual representations, I shall argue, can often perturb the homogeneity and harmony cinematic and wider discourse can project.

Furthermore, cinematic representations of a non-place-bound culture are usually interpreted through their primary meaning, but the identities these films articulate are never positioned in the broader context, on the map where national identities are defined. The 'junkulture' articulated in *Trainspotting*, urban poverty on the outskirts of Madrid in *Barrio*, those who start their own free radio station to voice their culture in *Radiofreccia*, and all the other cultural identities in the films I discuss are significant not just insofar as they represent a small-scale, non-dominant, and often non-place-bound culture (hereafter 'micro-culture') within the large-scale, dominant, and place-bound culture (hereafter 'macro-culture') of their surrounding nations. The way a micro-culture is articulated narratively through the image track and the sound track can represent the micro-culture – and its members – as being inside or outside the macro-culture, thus providing the textual materials for an inclusive or exclusive audiovisual mapping of a cultural identity on the dominant national identity. A central point of the thesis is that the positioning of a cultural identity on the dominant national identity map can offer possibilities for different

[3] Using Lacanian terminology, I refer to 'Other' as the external menacing force represented by differences in the Symbolic order of signification, which threatens the prelinguistic Imaginary plenitude represented by unity – often connected to ideas of unified national identity or religious identity. Jo Evans (2007) employs the concept for a similar purpose: '[Lacan's] capital 'O' tends to denote a relationship between the subject and a Symbolic order beyond the reach of the Imaginary that, for the purposes of [her] paper, is considered to include concepts of nationality, religion, and myth. His small 'o', on the other hand, tends to refer to an 'other' conceivable in the Imaginary as a form of reflection of, and projection from, the subject.' (p. 176). While the first concept defines the 'Other' outside the imagined national unity, the 'other' differences conceivable as present in the imagined national unity are inscribed inside the nation. Indeed, Edward Said's concept of oriental 'Other' (1978) and the related tropical 'Other' (Aparicio and Chávez-Silverman 1997) to which I refer later allow for a similar interpretation using Lacan's concept of 'Other', which was a clear influence for Said's oriental 'Other'.

identifications that do not fully emerge unless the films' soundtracks are taken into consideration alongside the visuals. Through its audiovisual treatment in the narrative – in other words, by being articulated narratively through visuals and music – the surface micro-culture progressively takes on a wider meaning in the narrative, and its inclusive or exclusive audiovisual mapping contributes to forming a gallery of audiovisual representations of the micro-culture. If a micro-culture accrues several exclusive audiovisual representations, its recurring exclusion creates a precedent and becomes naturalised as the micro-culture's fixed feature.

In this thesis, I propose to examine the way popular songs operate in films to construct paths for identifications inside and outside the borders of national identity in order to enter a different field of possibilities, which I am going to refer to as cultural identities. I shall elaborate on the reasons for using the term cultural identities in the following pages. For now, I am going to offer a few initial reflections on the broad rationale at the basis of the selection of films for the present project. I believe selecting known films and directors established as representatives of the national cinemas in question would be counterproductive for a project aimed at observing the above-mentioned functions of popular songs in films. Instead, I decided to include popular films that are not canonised as representatives of their respective national cinemas, which might widen the possibilities for different identifications invited through popular music. Choosing only national classics would not offer a significant variety of musical and other narrative materials with which to formulate answers to these questions and would not respond to another notorious absence in film studies: the popular cinemas of Europe, the cradle of art cinema *par excellence*. As Richard Dyer and Ginette Vincendeau state in their introduction to *Popular European Cinema*:

> Part of the existing map of cinema is coloured in quite clearly: there is America, which is Hollywood, which is popular entertainment, and there is Europe, which is art. Critics and historians of film have started to put new shades into the picture […] Yet one aspect of the equation has remained stubbornly unacknowledged: popular entertainment cinema made by Europeans for Europeans. […] The popular cinema of any given European country is not always acknowledged even in the general national histories of film in that country.
>
> (Dyer and Vincendeau 1992, p. 1)

While studies that include popular cinemas are beginning to surface,[4] the point about the dichotomy between America, Hollywood, and popular on the one hand, and Europe and art-house on the other, remains engrained in discourse about the cinemas of Europe, as exemplified in scholarship about the national cinemas and film histories of the three European countries covered in this thesis, which still often privilege films by the usual acclaimed directors – and generally feature few remarks about their music.

The adjective 'popular' calls for a brief clarification regarding its use and meaning alongside two other terms it accompanies in the thesis: 'songs' and 'films'. Straightforward definitions of 'popular' are generally avoided. Those who address the issue usually introduce a few broad definitions and contextualise their use alongside other terms, often leaving all the definitions on the table, and sometimes admitting how 'popular' resists being clearly defined and reduced to a foolproof guide to differentiating between 'popular' and 'non-popular' films and songs. I am going to discuss briefly definitions of 'popular' implied in popular music studies and film studies discourse. In the opening pages of *Understanding Popular Music*, Roy Shuker (2001) surveys two broad definitions of 'popular': 'appealing to the people' (generally meant in a commercial sense) and 'grounded in or 'of the people' ('folk') (p. 3). After observing how the general meaning 'commonly liked or approved of by a large audience or the general public' which the adjective 'popular' conveys if applied to persons, products, practices, or beliefs, becomes 'widely consumed' if applied to media including films and records, Shuker swiftly warns his readers against the reification of popular cultural texts and finally notes how 'the social nature of their consumption must always be kept in mind' (p. 3). In the section about 'popular music', he surveys different contributions to debates about 'what is popular music' – a question which eminent popular music scholar Richard Middleton famously said to be 'so riddled with complexities […] that one is tempted to follow the example of the legendary definition of folk song – all songs are folk songs, I

[4] See, for example, Hallam and Marshment (2000), Eleftheriotis (2001), Lázaro Reboll and Willis (2004), Wood (2005) among other books where popular cinemas are addressed extensively and European films are studied alongside Hollywood films, and often exclusively. O'Leary's conference paper '"Cinepanettone con nonna e papà": Rituals of Cinema-going and the Challenge to Scholarship' (2009) is among the few contributions on a largely unstudied variety of popular Italian Christmas films.

never heard horses sing 'em – and suggest that all music is popular music: popular with *someone*' (1990, p. 3).

In the opening chapter of *Studying Popular Music*, Middleton reduces the main categories of meanings attached to 'popular' provided by Frans Birrer (1985)[5] to a *positivist* definitional synthesis – 'popular' in a quantitative sense, that is widely disseminated by mass media – and one described in terms of *sociological essentialism* – 'popular' in a qualitative sense, that is associated with 'the people', which implies a perspective from 'above' or from 'below' depending on whether 'the people' is regarded as a manipulated, standardised entity ('popular' as 'mass', 'commercial') or as authentic, spontaneous grass-roots ('popular' as 'of the people') (pp. 4-6). Ultimately Middleton highlights the dangers *positivist* approaches involve (the reification of popular music) and the contradictions brought by *sociological essentialism* (the reduction of popular music to abstract schemata), warns against understanding necessary distinctions between 'popular music' and its Others too rigidly, and highlights the importance of considering 'popular music' as a fluid element in the context of a '*whole musical field*' perpetually '*in movement*' (pp. 6-7, original emphasis).

While Shuker discusses Kassabian's (1999) focus on which kinds of music are disregarded as a consequence of understanding 'popular' as 'populist', Kassabian's own mapping of 'popular' applied to 'music' remains unaccounted for. Starting with the shift from early negative meanings 'low', 'base', 'vulgar', 'of the common people' (fifteenth century), to later positive meanings (late nineteenth century) tracked by Raymond Williams (1976), she discusses key moments in the development of 'popular' as from 'above' to Frankfurt School theorists and 'popular' as from 'below' to British cultural studies (pp. 113-115). Kassabian surveys current ideas surrounding 'popular' and draws three broad non-exclusive definitions which I abridge below:

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[5] 1 *Normative definitions*. Popular music is an inferior type.
2 *Negative definitions*. Popular music is music that is not something else (usually 'folk' or 'art' music).
3 *Sociological definitions*. Popular music is associated with (produced for or by) a particular social group.
4 *Technologico-economic definitions*. Popular music is disseminated by mass media and/or in a mass market.
(Birrer 1985, p. 104, quoted in Middleton 1990, p. 4).

> **popular-as-folk**: home-made, unmediated, sometimes unpolished, and 'of the folk', 'of the people' (e.g. 'Happy Birthday', 'Auld Lang Syne', garage bands, church singing), as opposed to a group defined as the elite;
> **popular-as-mass**: contemporary, mass-mediated, produced and consumed, or large (in a quantitative sense) (e.g. Top 40, alternative, hip-hop, world beat music), as opposed to 'folk' (historical practices of small communities, e.g. shape-note singing) and 'art' (the culture of a social elite, e.g. 'classical' music);
> **popular-as-populist**: carries a politicised meaning, becomes shorthand for oppositional and expresses a countercultural perspective (e.g. punk).
>
> (Kassabian 1999, p. 116)

Music often blurs these definitions and, considering the examples provided, it is apparent that fitting one genre under one meaning often seems reductive and counterproductive for understanding popular music.

Shuker briefly surveys definitions based on the genres included (Clarke 1990), on the commercialisation of popular music (Burnett 1996, Clarke 1990, Garofalo 1997) often assumed to receive conscious and focused attention by audiences (Kassabian 1999), on whether music employs technology (Jones 1992, Blake 1992), its storage and distribution, and its own musical theory and aesthetics (Tagg 1982), and concludes his section providing a tentative direction for definitions of popular music:

> It seems that a satisfactory definition of popular music must encompass both musical and socio-economic characteristics. Essentially, all popular music consists of a hybrid of musical traditions, styles, and influences, and is also an economic product which is invested with ideological significance by many of its consumers.
>
> (Shuker 2001, p. 7)

Middleton similarly tries to emphasise the importance of maintaining and exploring the relationships between economic and ideological aspects, between musical and ideological aspects, and between all these and cultural relations in the socio-historical context where musical practices exist (1990, p. 7). Kassabian shows how keeping all these ideas in the picture informs important steps towards understanding popular music and calls for including 'the musics we don't choose', which she terms 'ubiquitous musics' (1999, p, 117), in a field largely defined by popular-as-populist. All three conclusions, despite providing a different mapping, point towards a similar

concern. Accepting one meaning without interrogating musical texts further imposes a serious restriction on the perspective through which one considers popular music. The songs, genres, and artists discussed extensively in this thesis always fit one – and almost always two – among the definitions I summarise above. These songs, genres, and artists are 'popular' in the socio-historical context where the films are set, in the socio-historical context where the films originate, or in both.

While the general definitions of 'popular' applied to music in popular music scholarship are pertinent for films, the mapping of film studies differs substantially. In the passage I quote above, Dyer and Vincendeau (1992) present 'popular' as the Other of 'art', and distinguish between the acclaimed European art cinema tradition and 'popular entertainment cinema made by Europeans for Europeans' (p. 1). Among the three broad definitions found in the popular music scholarship I refer to above, popular-as-mass remains, roughly matches those Dyer and Vincendeau refer to as 'market approaches', and shows similar limitations (1992, p. 2). However, the ideas surrounding the definitions popular-as-folk and popular-as-populist are reorganised under a broader 'anthropological approach' (*ibid.*), necessarily excluding the 'home-made/unmediated' connotation precluded to films, pushing the 'politicised/oppositional/countercultural' connotation towards 'art', and including different takes on the 'folk' and the 'populist' in the 'popular'. Since films are obviously never 'of the people' in the sense of 'home-made', notions of popular-as-folk adapt to films to include those using popular cultural practices largely perceived as 'unmediated'. If scrutinised, however, their popular-as-folk credentials quickly crumble, showing how these practices are often mediated and constructed 'as folk'.

After beginning to explore what they usefully describe as the 'productive messiness' occurring between market and anthropological approaches, Dyer and Vincendeau suggest a direction for understanding 'popular' through the contradictory areas between these two necessarily complementary approaches. Ideas whereby 'popular cinema' would express a culture 'of the people' in a 'pure', 'unmediated' way (film studies' version of popular-as-folk) are untenable because cinema and the market are not separable. Considering films and their audiences without understanding the market behind films, the popular culture forms these feature, and their mediation can produce a partial and polarised understanding of 'popular'. The inverse process seems equally counterproductive. As both Dyer and Vincendeau's

'Introduction' and the above-mentioned popular music sources clearly point out, market and audiences are deeply entangled, and one-sided definitions never suffice.

For Eleftheriotis (2001) exploring the 'productive messiness' of popular in the polarised field between its 'commercial' and its 'folk' connotation leads towards a conceptualisation of 'the polarity between the commercial and the folk in the popular as a relationship of mutual dependence rather than exclusion'. He states that '[I]f we overcome the semantic opposition, we can see that "popular cinema" refers both to socio-economic structures of production, circulation and consumption of films and to ways in which audiences relate to the texts produced, circulated and consumed within these structures.' (p. 73). He then mentions Victor Perkins's model of 'accessibility' (1992) as a first attempt to combine 'commercial' and 'folk' definitions of popular cinema.

Given its relevance for understanding why the films I chose fit the description 'popular', Perkins's ideas require close consideration. He tries to conceptualise popular cinema as

> a category of access identifying films whose comprehension and enjoyment require only such skills, knowledges and understandings as are developed in the ordinary process of living in society—not those that come with economic or cultural privilege. The terms of access unite the formal with the cultural since what is learned in the ordinary processes of life varies with place and time. Thus a film fully accessible to its French audience will no longer belong to the popular cinema when it arrives in England equipped with subtitles. […] Factors of those kinds contribute to the process whereby movies popular in their countries of production enter the structures of art cinema abroad.
>
> (Perkins 1992, pp. 195-196)

While there are debatable and potentially problematic assumptions at the basis of Perkins's model, its grounding in the socio-historical and geographic context where the production, circulation, and consumption of films takes place is helpful to understand films on their home ground. Perkins notes how differences coded in the original language are not accessible for foreign audiences who watch films subtitled or dubbed, but there are other non-linguistic codes learned in the ordinary processes of life in another place and time that can influence British audiences' engagements with cinemas of other countries. For example, British audiences for *Barrio* could not interpret gypsies playing music and leading a goat to perform equilibrist moves

balancing on a stool using knowledge accrued through their daily lives – and neither could Italian audiences – but for Spanish audiences these shows are not a strange sight. Their accessibility works for Spanish audiences but not for other audiences, who might interpret the whole scene as a surreal element of a film world loosely based on a foreign urban environment. Showing Adamo records means nothing for non-Italian audiences and perhaps young Italians would even not get the reference, whereas a Pavarotti album would be known to a broader demographic without any place- and time-specific knowledge. Similarly, Italian and Spanish audiences might not get the Archie Gemmill reference in *Trainspotting*, the working-class connotation of the brass band in *The Full Monty*, and the Welshness of rugby in *Twin Town*, but James Bond, *Flashdance*, whereas the class connotation of a vintage convertible car[6] are not dependent on the knowledge Britons alone possess. While films where certain narrative aspects require basic insider knowledge are not inaccessible, these, I would argue, offer further accessibility for audiences who possess the basic insider knowledge, which means different audiences are interpellated differently. Perkins's ideas, however vague, point towards an interesting direction for understanding 'popular' through anthropological approaches. Assessing how popular films are through market and anthropological approaches poses similar place- and time-specific problems, which both Dyer and Vincendeau (1992) and Eleftheriotis (2001) acknowledge. For today's British audiences *Barrio* could be largely perceived as a Spanish take on social realism that does not require basic insider knowledge, pitched for art cinemas and not for big financial returns, but these ideas are selectively highlighted while its place- and time-specific content and its profile on the home ground ignored.

Further complications can arise. Perkins notes how 'The sense of the popular has often been of work which does not so much meet the needs of the people (positively valued) as feed the appetites of the mob, understood as debased and mindless.' (1992, p. 196). Ideas of popular-as-folk (negatively valued), the 'lowest common denominator', and other similarly devaluing terms reinforce the polarised field where opposites exclude one another and films falling somewhere between 'art' and 'trash' are abandoned in the limbo between being neither good enough to be art nor bad enough to be trash. These reflections are essential for understanding why

[6] In *Twin Town*, the Lewis twins steal a vintage AC Cobra.

seemingly different films are all put under the broad description 'popular' in this thesis. The definitions I outline above are all different aspects of a complex and elusive concept. The nine films I chose fit one description of 'popular cinema' in the context (place and time) where the films originate. While the British films addressed in the following pages are extensively written about in film scholarship about British cinema, the Spanish and Italian films I chose are generally disregarded in the scholarly discourse surrounding Spanish cinema and Italian cinema – a clear consequence of conservative institutional attitudes prevalent in the Spanish and Italian academies. The inclusion of popular films in studies of British cinema and the tradition of researching popular culture started by British cultural studies are clearly related, but these films are still often written about in national or regional terms – which, I shall argue, can obscure the other identifications their stories can offer.

Before moving on to a review of academic literature relevant to this thesis, I am going to outline the structure of this opening chapter. To offer a comprehensive contextualisation of where I situate my project, I will reflect on the scholarly writing that informs the theoretical basis for the perspective I later develop. Firstly, I will discuss a range of film music studies sources and film studies sources that consider the concept of a national cinema. Secondly, I will clarify the concepts of identity as well as identification, and explain the understanding of cultural identity that my work is centred on. Thirdly, I will offer a few reflections about the rationale for the selection of British, Spanish, and Italian films from the second half of the 1990s, providing a brief account about the key moments in the development of compilation soundtracks in the cinemas of Britain, Spain, and Italy, and outline the three countries' socio-historical landscape in the 1990s. Finally, I will complete the introduction with notes about the specialised terminology I will be using. I will discuss current film scholarship's perspective on soundtracks in the national cinemas of Britain, Spain, and Italy in Chapter Two, Three, and Four respectively.

Film (Music) Studies

Since its inception, the discipline of film music studies has been largely focused on the film music practices of classical Hollywood cinema, which has inevitably exerted a twofold influence on the selection of cinematic and musical texts given scholarly attention in the following years. There is a notable absence, on the one hand, of films made outside Hollywood and, on the other hand, of scholarship about the extensive use of popular music in Hollywood film music practices since the 1950s.

There are a few exceptions to the Hollywood-centric focus of film music scholarship,[7] but the perspective these studies propose does not allow for the understanding of the given films' cultural specificity. In *Unheard Melodies* (1987) Claudia Gorbman analyses two French films alongside a few Hollywood films. However, the presence of non-Hollywood films alone does not necessarily guarantee a focus about the films' non-Hollywood origins. She does not address their cultural specificity, there is no trace of their being different, 'other' to Hollywood films, which are also analysed at the end of the section. Furthermore, French cinema is widely perceived to stand for art cinema more than French identity – just as Hollywood cinema is widely perceived to stand for mainstream cinema more than US identity. Similarly, the films Royal S. Brown discusses in *Overtones and Undertones* (1994) include the godfather of French art cinema (Jean-Luc Godard) alongside representatives of Hollywood's golden age, including a few films and several composers, which again makes the selection presented quite predictable and clearly elitist. Again, Godard's films are not addressed for their cultural specificity, but for their high cultural status in the ranks of art cinema, which positions these films in the same league as the canonised layer of the mainstream, classical Hollywood. However, whereas Brown restricts his textual analyses to the place of music and image, where the films and their music are discussed outside their respective cultural contexts, Gorbman hints at the cultural dimension of film music:

> Music signifies in films not only according to pure musical codes, but also according to *cultural* musical codes and *cinematic* musical codes. Any music

[7] The studies I am going to discuss are predominantly Anglophone. While there are contributions to film music studies in other languages (see, for example, Adorno and Eisler (1947), Zofia Lissa (1965), Michel Chion (1994)), the scholarship where popular songs are given serious attention remains predominantly Anglophone.

> bears cultural associations, and most of these associations have been further codified and exploited by the music industry.
>
> (Gorbman 1987, pp. 2-3)

The example she later gives to illustrate cultural musical codes is a Bach fugue (p. 13) but, unfortunately, the issue of how these codes operate slips towards the background in the following pages. Furthermore, the films she chooses, which she defines in the afterword as belonging to 'a rather traditional narrative cinema' (p. 162), and her perspective (chiefly narratological), foreclose possibilities for reflections about the cultural musical codes of pop soundtracks, a phenomenon which, as she herself notes, 'has emerged with ever greater insistence in popular movies' (p. 162). However, Gorbman's early acknowledgement of the cultural dimension of film music pointed to paths in the study of film music that are still largely uncharted. The study of a culturally diverse range of films featuring popular music that I propose poses a variety of extremely interesting questions regarding the distinctive possibilities offered by popular music for delineating the cultural dimension where the cinematic narrative unfolds.

The terms through which early film music scholarship defines its subject deserve a brief aside. Despite the generally known instances of popular music in films as early as the 1950s and the lesser known inclusion of popular songs in early films (see Altman 2001), those studies focused exclusively on classical scoring practices often refer to their subject as 'film music', following tacit assumptions whereby classical film music is the only film music – or at least the only film music deserving of scholarly attention. Whereas it becomes clear by reading through the contents of these books that popular music is largely disregarded, the first title where the absence of popular music is clearly implied is Kathryn Kalinak's *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (1992). Ironically, Kalinak, who explicitly defines the subject of her study as classical Hollywood film music, seems to bring up popular film music more often than her forerunners and complements her textual analyses with a few reflections about the pop score and the composers' attitudes towards its early varieties (pp. 186-7), to which I will return later.

The classical Hollywood-centric focus has begun to widen as edited books like *Celluloid Jukebox: Popular Music and the Movies Since the 1950s* (Romney and Wootton 1995) have started to catch up on popular music, including the perspective

of critics, filmmakers, and musicians, and books like Jeff Smith's *The Sounds of Commerce* (1998) have offered a comprehensive study of the development of popular film music. While *Celluloid Jukebox* does not offer a scholarly perspective on popular film music, it does begin to explore uncharted territory, putting together an interesting selection of contributions by a diverse range of professionals in the field and several interviews where filmmakers and musicians discuss their views about popular music and films. However Hollywood-centric, *The Sounds of Commerce* constitutes the first scholarly perspective on a trend that started in the 1950s and yet was utterly disregarded by the academy until the 1990s. Jeff Smith's study reveals interesting aspects of the promotional as well as aesthetic and cultural dimensions of popular film music, following its development from the rise of the pop idiom in composed scores to the inclusion of pop songs in compiled scores from the 1960s onwards. Its broad scope alone constitutes a significant cornerstone in the attempt by a growing community of film music scholars to bring the aesthetic and cultural specificity of popular film music to the surface alongside its often stigmatised promotional functions. Largely regarded as the principal criteria at the basis of every compilation score by several composers and critics, the commercial aspects of these new scoring practices continued to eclipse all the other functions a compilation score can perform for several years. At the same time, Smith casts light on the way promotional factors influence the compilation score. A perspective on film music as aesthetic and cultural phenomenon can often leave the commercial reasons that influence the compilation of a score out of the frame. If we think about film music in the context of national cinema, other factors can posit further questions. British, Italian, and Spanish cinemas share a history of negotiating their aesthetic, cultural, and national identities externally, against the Hollywood colossus, as well as internally, among the fragmented identities present in their territories. The way states protect home cinemas from foreign competitors and privilege certain representations of nations through films by subsidising those productions that conform to their ideal of national cinema ought to be considered as well. A study of these three 'national' cinemas would be incomplete if it did not at least acknowledge the influence that these factors can exert on the way compilation soundtracks are assembled. Whether these practices are explicitly addressed in the guidelines through which state and place-bound media companies shape representations of a country's

identities still remains largely unknown. While there are potentially interesting clues in the soundtracks I examine, considering these aspects remains at the margins of the scope of this thesis. I therefore decided to point out the songs that represent interesting objects for a study on the above topic, but shall not comment extensively on their relevance.

Popular film music has traditionally stirred intense criticism by the gatekeepers of classical scoring practices and cinematic discourse alike. Kalinak (1992) and Smith (1998) provide a few telling samples of the reactions of the establishment of film composers against the compilation score. Kalinak quotes David Raksin who 'claims that "this business of having rock and pop in everything is just absolutely absurd," and […] Elmer Bernstein's observation that the music in some films "seems to drone on quite unrelated to the events in the picture."' (p. 186). Smith reports established film composers' reactions against the compilation score voicing their concern that 'a group of unwashed ruffians whom they believed could neither write, arrange, nor even read music' (p. 162) could put their positions in danger. He quotes David Raksin's complaint about the ubiquitous rock scores of the 1960s: 'It is one thing to appreciate the freshness and naïveté of pop music and quite another to accept it as inevitable no matter what the subject is at hand – and still another to realize that the choice is often made for reasons that have little to do with the film itself.' (p. 162) Moreover, he observes that:

> this resistance to commercial rock and pop soundtracks continues to this day. In an interview for Karlin and Wright's *On the Track*, published in 1990, Elmer Bernstein said, "Today the heads of most music departments are basically record-industry people, and their job is basically to sell as many records as they can. That's a legitimate thing for selling records but it does very little for the art of film music."
>
> (Smith 1998, p. 262)

These remarks express the general feeling the gatekeepers of the classical Hollywood tradition share against the compilation score, which is routinely dismissed on the grounds of its aesthetic failure and its transparent links to box-office success and record sales.

But similarly fierce criticism of popular music in films is still expressed today by critics and academics alike, and appears in the discourse about film music in the non-Anglophone cinemas I address. Teresa Fraile-Prieto quotes Heriberto and Sergio

Navarro's concern about the threats popular songs represent for incidental musical themes, which are jeopardised

> cuando los intereses comerciales no los han sustituido por una serie de canciones interpretadas por grupos de moda. Aunque el comercio de las bandas sonoras y la inclusión de canciones ha existido desde varias décadas antes, ésta ha sido une tendencia desarrollada hasta el abuso en los años ochenta y noventa.
> (when commercial interests have replaced them with a series of songs performed by trendy bands. Although the practice of selling soundtracks and including songs has existed for several decades, this tendency has been developed to the level of abuse in the eighties and nineties.)[8]
>
> (Navarro and Navarro 2003, quoted in Fraile-Prieto 2008, p. 347)

Later Fraile-Prieto documents the scandalised reactions of music and film critic Alejandro Pachón who, writing about popular music in cinema, calls the marriage between original music and hit songs 'adultery' and wonders how certain composers can defend these disgraceful practices (Pachón quoted in Fraile-Prieto 2008, p. 348).

William Hope (2005) quotes and even justifies Italian film critic Marco Giusti and his opinion about the use of pop period music by 'certain directors [who] think […] that a song from the Sixties by Patty Pravo or Nada can make a scene poetic. There isn't a single Italian director who hasn't slipped one of these songs in.' Hope deems Giusti's dismissive opinion 'a justifiable criticism of using period pop music as a facile, head-on assault upon the viewer's emotions – with the heavily indexed public and private associations that such songs will inevitably trigger' (p. 20).

While perhaps amusing, these remarks represent the starkly resistant positions several critics sustain against popular music's perceived contaminating effects. The heavily indexed public and private associations Hope talks about, as Smith himself concludes, represent the distinctive quality of popular film music:

> While formally limited, the familiarity of pop and rock made them ideal for establishing contemporary settings and characters. The strongly referential element of rock and pop music […] enhanced that familiarity by forcefully linking tunes to their specific cultural and historical context. It was this latter

[8] All the English translations given throughout the thesis are mine unless stated otherwise.

> element that gave popular music its associational potency, a power that more than compensated for its formal limitations.
>
> (Smith 1998 pp. 162-3)

It is precisely the familiarity of soundtracks and the links between songs and their specific cultural and historical contexts that constitute the distinctive feature of compilation scores. Smith hints at popular music's power to evoke a given cultural and historical context, but does not develop the theme of cultural identities, which I believe can widen our perspective about the functions popular songs perform in films by casting light on the possibilities these offer for the construction of identities.

The years following *The Sounds of Commerce* (1998) saw several significant contributions to the field beginning to explore the fascinating association between film music and the construction of identities as well as to widen their scope to include popular music and non-Hollywood films. *Music and Cinema* (Buhler, Flinn, and Neumeyer 2000) featured essays about other cinematic traditions as well as popular music, such as Wendy Everett's essay on songs in contemporary European cinema and Caryl Flinn's piece on music in the New German Cinema. The section entitled 'Beyond Classical Film Music' seeks to respond precisely to, as the editors identify it, 'the tendency of film-music criticism and scholarship to privilege Hollywood practices – especially those of its so called golden age' (p. 5). Furthermore, the focus on the significance of music in the cinematic construction of ideologies and identities represents a perfect springboard for reflections about the cinematic construction of identities through popular songs that constitutes the principal focus of this thesis.

Caryl Flinn's chapter about the New German Cinema shows how film music offers a different angle on the history of a complex cultural formation like postwar Germany, a history that can be 'redirected' through the use of scoring practices by the individuals who participate in every stage of the production of meaning – from directors to academics (p. 121). Throughout the essay, one recurrent feature of her analysis helps readers understand how film music influences constructions of German culture. Flinn's focus is not only on which facet of culture is (re)presented through a particular musical piece, but especially on the way the place of music in the filmic narrative, which characters engage with it and how, can shape the potential cultural meanings a film conveys through its soundtrack. Beethoven's Ninth

Symphony, a celebrated signifier of high German culture, is reworked to articulate the stances about German culture in the three postwar films she focuses on. Flinn identifies key scoring techniques through which previously recorded music is reworked in these films of the postwar era, which I believe can provide a framework to explore the way existing music works to conjure up cultural identity in the films I am going to focus on: 'it [previously recorded music] is reframed, and given new meanings, by its different context […] it is mixed with other, disparate musical forms, [it] is altered or "damaged" in some way [and] may not be played in its entirety' (p. 120). In other words the aspects she draws attention to here are context, intertext, sound treatment, and fragmentation. These are a few devices that can be used to weave a facet of the initial meaning of a piece of music with the other threads of the filmic narrative and produce the complex textual objects films are, where previously circulated music can acquire new meaning through the interaction between sound, music, image, and audiences' own histories. As Flinn shows, the positions those films offer are largely constructed through the way a piece of music interacts with other narrative aspects in the context of the film, through the intertextual relationships between all the musical threads present in the film narrative, through their place and sound treatment in the soundscape of the film narrative, and through the significant selection of parts or of the whole. All these textual factors are going to be considered later when I analyse the films in order to explore the audiovisual representations their narratives offer for the cultures their characters inhabit.

Another collection in which issues of cultural identification and ideology receive special attention is *Soundtrack Available* (Wojcik and Knights 2001), whose focus on popular music is a telling indicator of the increasing centrality of the 'Ugly Scrooge McDuckling' of early studies of film music, those pop scoring practices whose aesthetic bankruptcy was attributed to their excessive focus on profits. The editors highlight how their understanding of popular music as 'an overloaded cultural signifying system' (p. 8) leads to a necessary focus on the cultural and ideological functions of popular film music, which a few contributions address, under the heading 'Music As Ethnic Marker', through a perspective that seems pertinent for the present study.

Barbara Ching's piece, for example, focuses on the use of country music as shorthand for ideas of American authenticity encoded through its early cinematic appearances, which other films have later recoded for radically different effects. The films she focuses on place country music in the narrative foreground and, while their directors use the music for different reasons, the association between country and a particular facet of American culture is the shared component. As Ching notes:

> whatever their ambitions, filmmakers assume that country music bears a burden of a particularly American authenticity. A country soundtrack sounds the American heart, either affirming the purity of the "American way of life" or condemning a nation hypocritically mired in provincial materialism.
>
> (Ching 2001, p. 204)

The American authenticity these directors weave into their films resonates through country music, and the way their stances on the culture that those songs and their singers represent is constructed depends on the songs' overall narrative treatment. Furthermore, the resonance country music has in these films, I would argue, depends on the place of their soundtracks in the narrative foreground. In these films, music becomes a kind of 'invisible actor',[9] whose meaning, accrued by means of their circulation through different cultural formations as well as their roles in other films, is brought to a new narrative where a filmmaker can use their potential for different effects. However, the 'invisible actor' is definitely audible and supposedly recognised as the inhabitant of a particular cultural formation as well as of other popular texts. Recognition becomes essential for the production of cultural identities through music. However, as Ching reminds us, recognition is not a straightforward process. If songs bring meaning to films depending on their pre-cinematic lives, audiences attribute meaning to songs depending on their pre-cinematic experiences of songs. Whether country songs conjure up America's greatness or America's greed

[9] I further elaborate the concept of music as 'ghost actor' in the chapter entitled '"Please, Give Me Second Grace": A Study of Five Songs in Wes Anderson's *The Royal Tenenbaums*' (2008) where I quote Bob Last's description of those he calls 'MTV moments', where a movie 'clearly just changes gear for this external "actor"' (Bob Last, in Romney and Wootton 1995, p. 139). 'Ghost actor' is a variation I devised because among the songs I discussed there was a piece by Nick Drake, whose premature death by suicide could enter audiences' interpretations of a scene where a character who earlier attempted suicide tries to start over again. In the present context I propose 'invisible actor' instead, since I believe it suits a wider array of narrative possibilities, whereas 'ghost actor' was meant for a context where music had a similar, but quite a precise connotation.

depends on audiences' pre-cinematic experiences of songs' pre-cinematic lives. As I will discuss later, films can place the music's cultural significance in the limelight through several narrative devices and privilege a certain meaning over another through the audiovisual treatment that songs receive, but all these processes rely on the intertextual dimension films and music inhabit. Different audiences, as Ching hints at in the essay cited above, bring their different experiences of intertextuality to films – a feature Kassabian (2001) considers extensively in the book I discuss below. Intertextuality, as Ching's essay clearly shows, plays a paramount role in the aural (re)presentation of ideas about culture in films. The power of soundtracks to signify the cultural formations and the texts a particular music has travelled through largely depends on the intertextual dimension popular music texts inhabit. But there are other aspects of intertextuality related to identifications that I must explore to provide the basis for the present study.

Anahid Kassabian addresses the significant functions intertextuality and sound perform in film scores in *Hearing Film* (2001). In her study, she devises a framework for understanding the way soundtracks condition different paths for identifications where questions regarding popular music and identities enter the frame. Kassabian draws a distinction between assimilating identifications, where 'music facilitates perceivers in assimilating into one of the available subject positions of the film', and affiliating identifications, where 'the music proliferates possibilities by opening perception onto perceivers' own (socially conditioned) histories' (p. 113).[10] The concept of affiliating identifications defined by Kassabian will provide the theoretical grounding for the thesis's central argument. Through the wider understanding of soundtracks allowed by affiliating identifications, I will develop a framework for understanding how popular songs offer materials for the construction of cultural identities in films. As Kassabian states:

> Rather than assimilating perceivers into one particular subject position, these identifications make affiliations that do not require absorption of one subject

[10] In the pages leading up to those definitions, Kassabian clarifies her reasons for replacing 'spectators' with 'perceivers': 'Perceivers is the word I have chosen to designate the theoretical placeholder for audience members: it cannot be reduced to either textuality or an extratextual "real". While perceivers, as theoretical constructs, can never be the same as "real" audience members, they mark an important distinction from previous theoretical positions both because they are decidedly multiple and because they have ears.' (2001, p. 111). I hereafter use 'perceiver' in the sense and for the reasons defined by Kassabian.

> into another position. Unlike assimilating identifications, affiliating identifications can accommodate axes of identity and the conditions of subjectivity they create. They can permit resistances and allow multiple and mobile identifications.
>
> (Kassabian 2001, p. 139)

Her words contain the materials for a first attempt to clarify the concept of cultural identities in films. In order to do so, I am going to refer to Andrew Higson's reflections about national identity vs. cultural identity as offered in the article 'The Concept of National Cinema' (1989) and in the essay 'The Limiting Imagination of National Cinema' (2000) alongside Kassabian's theoretical model and clarify the links between their arguments and the ideas discussed earlier on national cultural identities and other cultural identities. There seems to be a parallelism between films in which a range of textual materials allow for identifications that stray away from national cultural identities 'in practice', on the one hand, and films where popular music makes affiliating identifications readily available, on the other. The relationship between these two aspects is going to be closely scrutinised in the following pages.

Higson (1989) defines three broad areas to examine if considering a given national cinema in terms of cultural identity: the films' 'content or subject matter'; the 'sensibility, or structure of feeling, or world-view' the films express; and their 'style […] formal systems of representation, […] modes of address and construction of subjectivity' (p. 43). Among the aspects falling under 'content' Higson names:

> that which is represented (and particularly the construction of 'the national character'), the dominant narrative discourses and dramatic themes, and the narrative tradition and other source material on which [the films] draw (and particularly the degree to which they draw on what has been constructed as the national heritage, literary, theatrically, or otherwise)
>
> (Higson 1989, p. 43)

What – and who – is represented and how, largely establishes whether the films made in a given country selectively confirm its dominant cultural identities as the national identity 'in practice' or counter their surface unity by letting non-dominant cultural identities enter the country's cinematic imaginary. For example, if a gay man is represented, we need to examine whether he is represented as a participant in the national cultural identity. If so, is he inscribed in the national cultural identity 'in

theory' (i.e. projected and supported through nations' institutional apparatuses) – for example, including his character through a nationalising reading despite the recurring exclusive representations of a gay man – or also 'in practice' (i.e. constructed through cinematic and wider discourse) – for example, including his character through the recurring inclusive representations of a gay man. After being clearly established as a gay man in the film, does he stay visible? Is he narratively repressed, perhaps through a final elimination – the clichéd and yet ineluctably fulfilled end for troublesome females in film noir, as I discuss in Chapter Four. Is he audible? Whose music and other texts (literature, theatre, other films, etc.) is he defined through? Among 'the narrative tradition and other source material' films use, Higson briefly hints at literature and theatre, and notes how whether these are 'constructed as the national heritage' matters (*ibid.*). His are important suggestions, which I think deserve being taken further. Films' intertextuality calls for a wider scope including music, films, and other texts constructed not only as the national heritage, but also as the national popular culture or as the popular culture of a given non-place-bound culture represented in the film. These questions require consideration of a film's music and sound alongside other narrative aspects, and the answers one finds for these questions combine to place a cultural identity on the map where nations imagine their identities through films. Different answers can produce different world-views and offer audiovisual materials for the construction of different subjectivities which are selectively allowed to enter the cinematic gallery of dominant cultural identities – or national readings of non-dominant ones – that films made in a given country are still so often constructed as. Higson urges us to analyse a given national cinema and its cultural identity by drawing attention to nations' inner differences:

> In considering cinema in terms of cultural identity, it is necessary also to pay attention to the processes by which cultural hegemony is achieved within each nation-state; to examine the internal relations of diversification and unification, and the power to institute one particular aspect of a pluralistic cultural formation as politically dominant and to standardise or naturalise it. Historical accounts of national cinemas have too often been premised on unproblematised notions of nationhood and its production. The search for a stable and coherent national identity can only be successful at the expense of repressing internal differences, tensions and contradictions – differences of class, race, gender, region, etc. […] Proclamations of national cinema are thus in part one form of 'internal cultural colonialism'…
>
> (Higson 1989, pp. 43-4)

To begin to think about cinema in terms of cultural identity would involve first considering which aspects of a pluralistic cultural formation are established as the dominant cultural identities and how. Crucially, it would involve remembering that naturalising certain identities as the national cultural identity involves not only repressing internal differences of class, race, gender, region, etc., but also a subtler exclusion process through representations where these differences are inscribed outside the national cultural identity – through cinematic discourse – and often written out of scholarship on national cinemas – through scholarly discourse about films. Considering films in terms of a national identity, I would argue, leads to a partial understanding of the positions available for identifications involving those cultural identities not inscribed in the national cultural identity 'in practice' or temporarily allowed to participate in the national cultural identity 'in theory' through a nationalising reading. Films, critics, and scholarship shape ideas about nations and identities. As Higson puts it:

> Cinema never simply reflects or expresses an already fully formed and homogenous national culture and identity, as if it were the undeniable property of all national subjects; certainly, it privileges only a limited range of subject positions which thereby become naturalised or reproduced as the only legitimate positions of the national subject. But it needs also to be seen as actively working to construct subjectivity as well as simply expressing a pre-given identity.
>
> (Higson 1989, p. 44)

So if we accept cinema's role as a site of construction for different subjectivities, exploring the textual materials films offer for the ongoing negotiation of cultural identities becomes more than just a way of finding pluralistic cultural formations below the surface of a homogenising national discourse. It becomes an invitation for perceivers to construct themselves as subjects beyond their nationality and through the other cultural identities that characterise them. However, considering how films, critics, and scholarship can selectively construct certain cultural identities as dominant, naturalising them as national, and other cultural identities as non-dominant are two inseparable steps towards understanding films in terms of cultural identity. Later, Higson calls for a broader focus whereby a country's film culture and the way audiences use films participate in the consideration of the national production:

> To explore national cinema in these terms means laying much greater stress on the point of consumption, and on the *use* of films (sounds, images, narratives, fantasies), than on the point of production. It involves a shift in emphasis away from the analysis of film texts as vehicles for the articulation of nationalist sentiment and the interpellation of the implied national spectator, to an analysis of how actual audiences construct their cultural identity in relation to the various products of the national and international film and television industries, and the conditions under which this is achieved.
>
> (Higson 1989, p. 45-6)

Analysing 'the *use* of films' is a methodological problem still calling for solutions. While Higson seems to imply links between, on the one hand, textual analysis and reading films in terms of national identity and, on the other, audience research and reading films in terms of cultural identity, I think neither methodology necessarily implies a given outcome. '[A]ctual audiences construct their cultural identity' using the audiovisual materials a movie makes available, whether textually or intertextually. Furthermore, audience research seems unhelpful for a project aimed towards understanding how songs can influence audiences' identifications alongside the visuals, dialogue, and other non-musical aspects. While a perceiver could say who they identify with in a film, relying on someone's awareness of whether and how songs condition their identifications alongside the visuals would be a major issue. On the other hand, a rigid textual analysis could produce equally problematic results, as the textual materials a film offers could be interpreted as channelling audiences towards a dominant reading, as Higson seems to suggest. Just as audience research does not automatically yield the genuine results Higson implies, textual analysis can allow for a wider perspective on a film where another reading emerges alongside the dominant reading available. Textual analysis can yield a different reading through considering the audiovisual materials a film makes available and showing how these materials allow for 'the implied national spectator' and 'actual audiences' to find someone through whom to negotiate the cinematic narrative. Exploring films through a close but broad textual analysis aimed at revealing the possibilities available to a perceiver at least acknowledges the contribution audiences bring to their experiences as filmgoers, beginning to account for the plurality of options. While imagining different audiences' experiences means leaving 'actual audiences' out, I think opening textual analysis towards imagining how different

audiences would use different audiovisual materials can widen the rigid interpretations its critics blame on textual analysis. Furthermore, a focus on the way different audiences *use* films is essential to explore the conceptual maze of cultural identities in cinema, for if a film invites a perceiver to hear a culture, the perceiver has to contribute through his/her acceptance of the offer, and the possibilities are indeed dependent on the perceiver's understanding of the offer.

Kassabian (2001) discusses soundtracks which offer identifications that can accommodate axes of identity instead of absorbing one subject into the position of another subject. These kinds of soundtracks, as I will argue, often provide the aural materials for the construction of cultural identities inside and outside the cinematic nations audiences inhabit. These aural materials, these axes of identity, are the options offered to a perceiver, the possibilities that a reading of films through the eyes and ears of 'the implied national spectator' can obscure. Kassabian points out how different scoring practices are related to these different kinds of identifications: 'Scores associated with assimilating identifications tend to use classical Hollywood materials and procedures, while affiliating identifications are more often associated with other musical materials, compiled scores, and less discreet cueing and mixing' (p. 142). Following Kassabian's observation, I have decided to concentrate on films where popular music in general, and popular songs in particular, represent a greater portion of their soundtracks, while classical scoring practices, where present, are not predominant. As the soundtrack album becomes a regular feature for late-1990s films where songs are predominant in the three countries I concentrate on, I chose among films for which there was a soundtrack album.

The functions of popular film music are still often evaluated in terms of their effectiveness vis-à-vis classical scoring practices. These comparisons are a clear manifestation of a process of redemption of popular film music, which directs attention towards how popular music fares in the territory of classical scoring practices, but often does not allow the distinctive functions of popular film music to be noticed. The two case studies presented in *Popular Music and Film* (Inglis 2003) offer different approaches to the elaboration of popular film music against classical scoring practices.

Lauren Anderson, for example, seeks to explore how the pop compilation score fulfils the traditional functions of the 'classical' composed score,

acknowledging the specificity of the compilation score and focussing on three distinctive features of popular music: songs' lyrical content, their structural independence, and the extratextual meaning popular music carries (p. 112). However, the perspective adopted for the understanding of how the extratextual associations operate in films seems to foreclose a few possibilities that are extremely significant for the comprehension of the relationship between popular film music and the construction of cultural identities. Anderson notes how:

> The extramusical associations that are brought about by rock history and culture are then used by film-makers to cue settings, character traits, and dramatic situations. Because popular music in compilation soundtracks fulfils functions of 'classical' film music and conveys meanings that are related to the music's social and historical contexts, it can be considered as a two-tiered system of communication. Such a system exists when one device (such as a popular song) can be read on two different levels, according to how much the viewer knows about that device and its associations.
>
> (Anderson 2003, p. 114)

The two-tiered approach, I would argue, does not account for how these associations are often present in films, which partially fills the gap for those Noel Carroll[11] defines as uninformed viewers and Anderson calls 'uneducated' viewers.[12] Extratextual associations are sometimes foregrounded through a careful weaving together of music, sound, and visuals, which can offer the cultural meaning of popular music to informed and uninformed viewers alike. Instances where the history and culture related to a particular genre emerge through the cinematic narrative are often found in films whose soundtracks provide significant aural materials for the construction of identities.

Carey and Hannan's (2003) study of the compiled score for *The Big Chill* (1983) clearly shows a concern about how popular music fulfils the functions established by classical scoring practices. According to the authors, many of the identified functions of music in films 'can be achieved *just as effectively* through the use of a compiled soundtrack of existing popular music songs as through the employment of a composed soundtrack' (p. 165, my emphasis). The inferiority complex that emerges through these faltering words narrows their perspective to the

[11] Anderson applies Noel Carroll's (1982) concept of the two-tiered system, which he developed in a study of 1970s films where directors use musical quotes and allusions to other films.
[12] The single inverted commas are present in Anderson's essay.

performance of the compilation score in the territory of the composed score, which hinders further understanding of those functions popular film music carries out differently, and perhaps more effectively, than classical scoring practices. For example, among the functions Carey and Hannan recognise, there is the ability 'to create a sense of period, location, or cultural background: "setting the scene"' (p. 164) which, however close to the ability of film music to offer materials to form cultural identities, is not fully developed in these terms despite a few instances where songs quite obviously provide these aural materials in the film. The paragraph about the Rolling Stones' 'You Can't Always Get What You Want', for example, hints at their connotation as 'epitome of rebellious and anti-establishment forces in the 1960s', hence their songs' power to evoke 'the "wild" or carefree or nonconformist youth of this group of characters' (p. 169), but the influence the audiovisual treatment of the piece has on the offer the soundtrack makes in the funeral scene is not recognised. For example, considering how 'You Can't Always Get What You Want' is woven into the filmic narrative might produce further, non-straightforward interpretations. The nonconformist connotation can acquire further nuances depending on the interaction between sound track and image track, and whichever other connotation a perceiver picks up equally takes up meaning in the context of the narrative. Its beginning as source music performed on the organ quickly gives way to the Rolling Stones' recording as dramatic scoring, and the characters are (re)presented at different degrees of detachment from the rebellious and nonconformist youth the soundtrack can evoke. All these factors offer different paths depending on the threads a perceiver picks up. One might concentrate on the irony the lyrical content creates in the context where it appears, while another one might focus on the nonconformist connotation of Rolling Stones' songs as a signifier of their youth. Some might do both or hear more than this. While there is no way of knowing exactly where songs might drive different audiences' experiences, I believe the paths songs offer for the construction of cultural identities are far more complex than a perspective haunted by the ghost of classical scoring practices would allow film music scholarship to account for.

Songs are the focus for Steve Lannin and Matthew Caley's *Pop Fiction* (2005), a short anthology where every essay discusses the use of a song in a film. Miguel Mera's piece about Lou Reed's 'Perfect Day' in *Trainspotting* (1996) gives a

comprehensive account about the specificity of pop soundtracks. The essay takes a significant scene of Danny Boyle's film as the focus of the opening paragraph, where Mera immediately notes the cultural references Sick Boy and Renton introduce through their conversation about popular culture, developing a connection between Renton, the protagonist, and Lou Reed. The song/film pair Mera chooses for his essay represents a perfect example of the possibilities songs can offer for the development of a character through the culture(s) popular music signifies. Mera opens a new perspective for the study of soundtracks where popular songs are amply discussed retaining classical scoring practices as the point of reference, but without letting the classical score's dominance obscure the pop score's distinctive narrative functions. Furthermore, the prominent place music was given in the filmic narrative since the opening sequence is acknowledged as a means to foreground Lou Reed's persona and therefore prepare the stage for 'Perfect Day', letting the connection between the two men (Reed and Renton) surface early on to produce further possibilities for a reading of the overdose sequence later. Again, the way the place of the music in the filmic narrative is constructed affects the functions the soundtrack can perform. While 'Perfect Day' does not offer a perspective on the culture the characters embrace in a national or geographical sense, it immediately becomes established as the aural signifier of the drug culture Lou Reed himself represented through his persona and his songs (Mera 2005, p. 88). As I shall propose in the following chapter, there are wider possibilities for identifications which, beneath the surface 'junkie' culture constructed through songs, can suggest cultural identities inside and outside the dominant national identity the narrative addresses. Mera's final remarks about all the threads that songs can weave into films encourage reflections on the specificity pop soundtracks bring to films: 'The *Trainspotting* soundtrack powerfully resonates with its audience, through a number of cultural, verbal, and musical signifiers in ways which a traditional orchestral score would have struggled to achieve' (p. 94). His essay contributes significantly to a shift in perspective towards the specificities of popular film music and touches on the connections between popular music and culture(s) in films, providing a solid grounding for the arguments I will develop in the following chapters.

The absence of European films in film music scholarship was finally addressed by *European Film Music* (2006), a collection edited by Miguel Mera and

David Burnand. In their introduction, Mera and Burnand discuss the problematic issue of European film and identity. Their perspective, I believe, could be equally helpful for understanding the cinematic tradition of the three countries I have chosen as the focus for the project. They talk of European identity as conceptual, and quote Catherine Fowler's introduction to the *European Cinema Reader* (2002), where she notes how ideas about European cinema are largely created and fed through discourse, and how scholarship chiefly focuses on the art cinema tradition often represented by a few movements that developed in certain areas of the continent. Similarly, these processes are often typical of scholarship about national cinemas and their music, which I shall discuss separately for Britain, Spain, and Italy. The selection of cinematic texts presented by Mera and Burnand seems to reflect these tendencies, too. The contributions about these three countries, for example, feature classic cinematic objects of study – the Ealing Comedies for Britain, neo-realism for Italy, and auteur directors Carlos Saura and Pedro Almodóvar for Spain. But despite their predictable cinematic choices, the contributions about Spanish and Italian films uncover a few key aspects of their soundtracks. Their influence on the ideas I develop later was essential. Overall, *European Film Music* opens a new perspective on a field where there are quite a few grey areas and especially where ideas about conceptual identities are overdue for a reconsideration in the light of the multifaceted cultural formations nation-states really are. Hopefully, the present study will contribute to casting light on those obscure areas and let identities be considered through a wider perspective. In the following section I will concentrate on the concept of cultural identity and explain how I understand those identities I broadly refer to as cultural.

(Cultural) Identities and Identifications

Earlier I brought up 'identities' without further elaboration on the concept. However, a difference clearly emerges between the constructed and imposed unity at the basis of dominant national cultural identities, on the one hand, and the non-dominant cultural identities discursively effaced from national cultural identity, on the other. Those I refer to as non-dominant cultural identities are related to a conception of identity that Stuart Hall defines through 'the post-modern subject, conceptualized as having no fixed, essential or permanent identity [assuming] different identities at different times, identities which are not unified around a coherent 'self'.' (1992, p. 277). Higson talks about 'other senses of identity and belonging' (2000, p. 66) (i.e. defined along other lines, not exclusively through nationality). In the entry about 'Identity' in *New Keywords* Bennett (2005) talks about similarly defined identities, which he describes as a development following global change and the resulting 'loosening of old identities that had become restrictive and limiting, […] the opening up of new possibilities, involving more complex and variable identifications', which Hall (1992, quoted in Bennett 2005) links to 'the emergence of new kinds of postmodern subjects and identities' (p. 174).

Bennett notes how identities may still involve national and religious allegiances, but may 'be to do with consumer choices, lifestyles, and subcultures, with gender, generation, and sexuality, or with involvement in social movements (environmentalism, anti-globalization activities, hunting or anti-hunting lobbies).' (pp. 174-5). This positive take on global change, as Bennett notes, 'draws attention to the different way in which we may now be implicated in social and cultural identities.' (p. 175). Those Bennett terms 'ascribed identities'

> are seen to be giving way to new possibilities of identification involving choice and negotiation, and in which there is the accommodation of pluralism and diversity (in place of unity) and change and transformation (in place of continuity). The constructed nature of identity is acknowledged and accepted – for some, identity comes to be considered a kind of performance – and this disillusioning process is not regarded as at all problematical: it is possible to recognise that identity is a fiction, and then to live and work with this fiction.
>
> (Bennett 2005, p. 175)

While below the unity and continuity national cultural identities offer on the surface there undoubtedly are changes and diversity, national cultural identities - whether 'in theory' or 'in practice' – often reflect rigid notions of a country's image, as the institutional apparatuses and the different discourses (cinematic, scholarly, etc.) that support these notions generally (re)produce and protect dominant national images rather than undercutting them. National as well as other identities defined through unity and continuity share the fictional quality these 'ascribed identities' possess, but their fiction inscribes certain instances of consumer choices, lifestyles, subcultures, genders, generations, sexualities, and other identities present on their territory, leaving out those instances threatening their unity and continuity. These 'ascribed identities' are the non-dominant sides of identities defined not through nations and religions, but along other lines, and these non-dominant sides are often without a place in the identities for which unity and continuity are vital, like national cultural identities.

Bennett notes the correlation between '[d]ominant and conventional discourses on identity' and an essentialist concept of identity, on the one hand, and '[m]ore recent and critical accounts' and an anti-essentialist, socially constructed concept of identity, on the other (2005, p. 173). Hall deploys a concept of identity of the latter variety, which he defines as 'strategic and positional' (1996, p. 3) both drawing on the discursive and the psychoanalytical baggage the terms 'identity' and 'identification' carry:

> I use 'identity' to refer to the meeting point, the point of *suture*, between on the one hand the discourses and practices which attempt to 'interpellate', speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be 'spoken'. Identities are thus points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us.
>
> (Hall 1996, pp. 5-6)

These 'points of temporary attachment' are the network through which identifications (which could be defined using Hall's words as those processes unfolding on discourses) are enabled. Another theoretical contextualisation is in order. Identification is a key concept in film studies and because different theorists

contributed to shaping it, I am going to clarify which conceptualisation is implied where I refer to identifications.

Psychoanalysis begins to slowly filter into film theory in the 1950s and becomes established as a significant current for the field in the 1970s. Largely based on the writing of Jacques Lacan on Freudian thought, psychoanalytic film theory brings the unconscious into film studies, shifting from seeing cinema as 'object' to considering filmgoing as a 'process' in which subject-formation[13] takes place. A subject's (trans)formation happens through processes known as identifications. While these are generically defined as reactions triggered by empathy for a character, unconscious processes occur besides these cognitive processes. Stam et al. (1992) provide a helpful outline to explain the difference between a generic understanding of identification as empathy and psychoanalytical identification: '*Empathy* = "I *know* how you *feel*"; knowledge and perception are its structuring categories. *Identification* = "I *see* as you see, from your *position*"; vision and psychic placement define its terms' (p. 151, original emphasis). Through identification in the sense of visual/psychic positioning, a different level of participation emerges, occurring below the perceiver's awareness threshold. While one knowingly feels emotionally close to a character one identifies/empathises with, being drawn towards a given positioning through the visuals happens below the cognitive radar. As whom, from whose position 'I *see*', however, is a point of differentiation between the two theorists who lay the basis for later ideas about identifications: Jean-Louis Baudry and Christian Metz.

In the essay 'Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematic Apparatus', Baudry (1974-5) distinguishes between a first level of identification, 'attached to the image itself, [that] derives from the character portrayed as a center of secondary identifications, carrying an identity which constantly must be seized and reestablished', and a second level of identification that 'permits the appearance of the first and places it "in action"—this is the transcendental subject whose place is taken by the camera which constitutes and rules the objects in this "world."'. Baudry finally describes identifications as engagements between the spectator and the

[13] Stam, Burgoyne, and Flitterman-Lewis (1992) outline the subject's salient characteristics: 'The term subject refers to a critical concept related to – but not equivalent with – the individual, and suggests a whole range of determinations (social, political, linguistic, ideological, psychological) that intersect to define it. Refusing the notion of self as a stable entity, the subject implies a process of construction by signifying practices that are both unconscious and culturally specific.' (pp. 123-4).

technological means through which films are relayed: 'the spectator identifies less with what is represented, the spectacle itself, than with what stages the spectacle, makes it seen, obliging him [*sic*] to see what it sees; this is exactly the function taken over by the camera as a sort of relay' (Baudry 1975-4, p. 45). Hence, for Baudry, *Identification* = I *see* as the camera, from its *position*, and through these apparatus-led identifications the ideological power the cinematic machine possesses can transform 'the embodied, socially situated individual into a spectatorial subject' (Stam 2000, p. 163). While Baudry's conceptualisation of identifications remains largely centred on the cinematic apparatus, for Metz the character becomes the 'you' as whom, from whose position 'I *see*', at least in those he terms secondary cinematic identifications (1975).

Metz's secondary cinematic identification is enabled through primary cinematic identification, which he defines as instances where 'the spectator *identifies with himself*, with himself as a pure act of perception (as wakefulness, alertness): as a condition of possibility of the perceived and hence as a kind of transcendental subject, anterior to every *there is*.' (1975, pp. 48-9). While there are obvious similarities between Metz's primary cinematic identification and Baudry's second level of identification, Metz takes secondary cinematic identification further. After the constitutive moments through which the looking spectator makes the perceived objects exist, other identifications are enabled. Metz attaches secondary cinematic identification to the character and describes instances where the out-of-frame character's point of view enables these identifications, providing 'a way out of the impasse of unity implied by the monolithic idea of primary identification, whether it be in terms of invoking "multiple identifications" suggested by the structure of unconscious fantasy or in terms of a "variety of subject positions" suggested by some forms of alternative cinema.' (Stam et al. 1992, p. 154). These are the kinds of identifications I am going to explore in the following chapters via the textual analysis of a range of audiovisual materials films offer.

Feminist film theory critiques the unproblematised masculinist spectatorship implied by earlier contributions to debates about identifications (see, for example, Mulvey 1975) and, through challenging their rigid conceptualisations, feminist scholars elaborate broader ideas about how identifications occur. In 'Desire and Narrative', Teresa de Lauretis (1984) theorises a 'figural narrative identification',

implicit in visual identification with the gaze (masculine, active) or with the image (feminine, passive),[14] involving a 'double identification with the figure of narrative movement, the mythical subject, and with the figure of narrative closure, the narrative image [in which] both figures can and in fact must be identified with at once, for they are inherent in narrative itself.' (p. 144).

Another concept feminists mobilised to offer a different take on identification is that of fantasy. In 'On the Subject of Fantasy', de Lauretis (1995) critiques the prevalent reading of Elizabeth Cowie's 'Fantasia'(1984), 'invoked by others to buttress the optimistically silly notion of an unbounded mobility of identities for the spectator-subject' (1995, p. 75). Instead, using Liliana Cavani's film *Il Portiere di Notte* (*The Night Porter*) (1974) as example, de Lauretis notes how the prevalent refusal to enter protagonist Lucia's sadomasochistic fantasy depends on audiences' subjectively as much as socially informed responses:

> Their identification in the film's fantasy was apparently restricted by other representations and constructions of identity, both subjective and social, conscious and unconscious, which they brought to their viewing of the film; and these overdetermined those spectators' reception of the film and their particular path through its multiple significations.
>
> (de Lauretis 1995, p. 82)

These factors influence engagements between audiences and films, and are accounted for in the elaboration of Kassabian's (2001) concept of affiliating identifications I refer to earlier. But the influence these factors exert on delineating the 'you' as whom, from whose position 'I *see*' redefines the reference point through which identifications are enabled.

The opening towards a wider but not limitless understanding of identifications offered by de Lauretis might offer an interesting direction to studies on identifications in general. In *High Contrast*, Sharon Willis (1997) gives similar suggestions towards reimagining the way identifications are thought about:

> An analysis equal to the complexity of the psychic operations involved in identification has to acknowledge, first of all, that identification is not a state, but a process, and that as such it is likely to be mobile and intermittent rather

[14] These and other related ideas are discussed further in the section on *Sono pazzo di Iris Blond* in Chapter Four.

> than consistent. We will do better to think of viewer identifications as scenarios rather than as fixations. Hardly confined to identifications with characters, then, these scenarios may equally well fasten on situations, objects, and places, or the cinematic apparatus itself.
>
> (Willis 1997, p. 102)

These are among the ideas mobilised where I discuss identifications: not only towards a character, but also towards a situation, group, place, ideal, etc.; not a state, but a process; and, crucially, as whom/what, from whose/what position not only 'I *see*', but also 'I *hear*'. If we understand identifications as the broad audiovisual processes whereby engagements between audiences and films occur, identities in the sense of 'points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us' (Hall 1996, p. 6) are magnets influencing our engagements, our movements through the film world.

Films audiovisually construct identities, which can attract perceivers and the 'representations and constructions of identity, both subjective and social, conscious and unconscious, which they brought to their viewing [and hearing] of the film' (de Lauretis 1995, p. 82). Which cinematic representations and constructions of identity on offer a perceiver accepts depends on which subjective and social, conscious and unconscious representations and constructions of identity the perceiver carries. Every perceiver and every audiovisually constructed character, situation, group, place, ideal, etc. is a patchwork, a 'hodge-podge'[15] of identities defined along different lines. Therefore, the engagements between a perceiver and whichever narrative element are neither a total fit nor necessarily sustained after the first contact. Which identities are represented and constructed, and how, can greatly influence which identifications are allowed and how a given perceiver's journey unfolds through her own engagements. Stam (2000) discusses spectators' heteroglossia and notes how:

> Spectators are involved in multiple identities (and identifications) having to do with gender, race, sexual preference, region, religion, ideology, class, and generation. Moreover, socially imposed epidermic identities do not strictly determine personal identifications and political allegiances. It is not only a question of what one is or where one is coming from, but also of what one desires to be, where one wants to go, and with whom one wants to go there.
>
> (Stam 2000, p. 233)

[15] Lacan calls the ego 'a hodge-podge of identifications' (quoted in Stam *et al.* 1992, p. 151).

The identities (and identifications) defined along other lines through which the post-modern subject's (trans)formation takes place require further attention. After considering various potential definitions for these other identities, I have settled for the term 'cultural identities'. I am going to reflect on the reasons for calling these identities cultural.

Generally, notions of cultural identity are place-bound and reflect essentialist and anti-essentialist views. In the essay 'Cultural Identities and Cinematic Representations', Stuart Hall ([1989] 1996) discusses the two major conceptions of cultural identity available:

> There are at least two different ways of thinking about "cultural identity." The first position defines "cultural identity" as one, shared culture, a sort of collective "one true self," hiding inside the many other, more superficial and artificially imposed "selves," which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as "one people," with stable, unchanging, and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history. This "oneness," underlying all the other, more superficial differences, is the truth, the essence, of "Caribbeaness."
>
> (Hall [1989] 1996, p. 211)

The way the first definition works closely mirrors the trajectory national identity follows to construct 'oneness' through its dominant narrative of a group of individuals sharing a culture, history, ancestors, which anchors its members to a central set of deep similarities above a sea of shallow differences threatening its stability. But the second definition takes another direction, weaving differences into the first, and providing a fundamental theoretical perspective on the concept I refer to in the thesis:

> There is, however, a related but different view of cultural identity, which qualifies, even if it does not replace, the first. This second position recognizes that, as well as the many points of similarity, there are also critical points of deep and significant *difference* which constitute "what we really are": or rather—since history has intervened—"what we have become." We cannot speak for very long, with any exactness, about "one experience, one identity," without acknowledging its other side—the differences and discontinuities which constitute, precisely, the Caribbean's "uniqueness." Cultural identity,

> in this second sense, is a matter of "becoming" as well as of "being." It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history, and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, they are subject to the continuous "play" of history, culture, and power. Far from being grounded in a mere "recovery" of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which, when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past.
>
> (Hall [1989] 1996, pp. 212-3)

These differences, their being in the process of becoming rather than being eternally fixed, essentialised ideas about a place and its inhabitants, are the fault lines I will explore in the following chapters. However, these fluid differences are not just defined through a smaller or broader geographical entity inside or outside the nation's essentialised image, but also defined along other, non-place-bound lines. Bennett (2005) notes how 'there is also now an extended range of uses [of the term culture] relating to forms of difference that operate both within nations and across the relations between them. Gay culture, lesbian culture, black culture, […] are all cases in point.' (p. 64). These uses are defined along lines of sexuality, gender, race, ethnicity, but not nationality. Furthermore, these uses all designate a non-dominant formation generally not represented as a recurring element in the national cultural identity 'in practice', while generally the corresponding dominant formation (straight, white) is a permanent element – however assumed and therefore unnoticed. While talking about gay, lesbian, and black culture makes sense, 'straight culture' and 'white culture' are not customary definitions, because the dominant status their members share makes labelling oneself along these lines unnecessary – and quite ideologically dubious.

Earlier, I briefly gloss 'culture' summarising Williams's anthropological definition of culture as 'a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general' (1983, p. 90). Calling the differences represented in the films I analyse 'cultural identities' is a balancing act between encouraging a sense of identity and belonging for those who identify with a non-dominant group and challenging the restrictive taxonomic divisions which a literal understanding of 'particular way of life' as a separate, distinct, and essentialised group can imply.

While the identities I include under a broad conceptualisation of cultural identities are quite different, their vagueness can offer a loose conceptual space where one can understand these identities not only in terms of what similar identities share, but also in terms of what dissimilar identities share. Those whose identities are marginalised through discourse about their nations' identities are not often given the possibility to enjoy inclusive cinematic representations of a group with which they share a sense of identity and belonging. However, one can enjoy inclusive cinematic representations of 'a group' without necessarily being precluded from feeling a sense of identity and belonging to another group. Furthermore, feeling a sense of identity and belonging to 'a group' (i.e. one among several *differences*) and not 'the group' (i.e. the 'one people') can provide the empowerment derived from feeling part of a dominant identity without the restrictive imagination of a dominant identity's 'oneness' and its necessarily rigid borders.

The identities invoked later are never the whole story about a character/group, but represent one among several lines along which a character/group takes and changes shape. If 'cultural' as 'of a particular way of life of a group' defines 'identity' as 'a point of temporary attachment to available subject positions', cultural identities in films are points of temporary attachment to available subject positions related to a particular way of life of a group towards which a perceiver is drawn. If we incorporate Hall's ideas about 'identities' as 'the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, [cinematic] narratives', the static notion expressed in the description of identities as points of attachment to subject positions becomes dynamic through two different takes on the process whereby identities are engaged. I am going to discuss these different takes further in the following pages. Finally, I would like to reflect on the reasons for talking about 'cultural identities' in the plural and not 'cultural identity' in the singular. I often use the term 'differences' and elsewhere in the thesis I refer to 'cultural identities' in the plural, because there are several lines along which differences are defined in the films I analyse. Therefore, talking about 'cultural identity' in the singular would not reflect the variety of differences these films offer through their soundtracks – and would potentially imply essentialised ideas about a unified culture its members share. Furthermore, the surface differences I discuss often point towards other broader divisions, which further complicates the audiovisual scenarios these films can offer. Following Hall's

ideas about ‘differences’ and ‘discontinuities’ as opposed to ‘one experience, one identity’ and the reflections developed above, I use the terms ‘differences’, ‘discontinuities’ and, tentatively, ‘cultural identities’ to reflect the pluralities I propose to weave into the discourse about these films by considering the narrative functions of their soundtracks.

While Hall’s complementary definitions provide fundamental initial reflections about the cultural identities I discuss later, there are a few aspects I wish to develop further to provide a basis for exploring films and their soundtracks. Becoming and being are fundamental processes and ideas for the formation of both cultural identities in the sense of points of attachment to subject positions defined along non-place-bound lines, and national identities in the sense of oneness. Neither are ‘something which already exists’. Cultural identities as I mean them ‘come from somewhere, have histories’, and are contended, too. However, national identity is often perceived as already there, whereas other identities can claim a certain contingency and their ongoing construction never becomes as fraught as similar conceptions of a national identity would. Questioning someone’s senses of identity and belonging that have to do with embracing drugs as a permanent lifestyle, poverty, rebelling against the restrictive options small town life can offer, etc. is never as threatening as questioning someone’s national identity. The first three instances I propose are not fixed the way someone’s national identity is largely perceived to be. However, as Hall says, these identities come from somewhere but also go somewhere, are perpetually transformed, ‘subject to the continuous “play” of history, culture, and power’ (p. 213).

Later Hall reveals his reasons for using the word ‘play’:

> How, then, to describe this play of “difference” within identity? […] The inscription of difference is also specific and critical. I use the word “play” because the double meaning of the metaphor is important. It suggests, on the one hand, the instability, the permanent unsettlement, the lack of any final resolution. On the other hand, it reminds us that the place where this “doubleness” is most powerfully to be heard is “playing” within the varieties of Caribbean musics.
>
> (Hall [1989] 1996, pp. 214-5)

While Hall clearly talks about varieties in the musical texts of a given place, I think his musical justification for using ‘play’ can equally point towards the place where

these unfixed identities are heard in the cinematic texts of a given place. If we challenge the dormant assumptions about films being representatives of nations as Higson advocates, we allow cinematic texts to "play" difference on to relatively stable maps of identity. Hall notes how the varieties of Caribbean musics articulate difference and doubleness, in other words these musics challenge perceptions of identity as stable, settled, and resolved. Caribbean musics represent a textual field, a space where different musical texts coexist. A film is traditionally thought of as a text, not a textual field. However, if we consider film as audiovisual and think about all the other texts shown and heard in a film, the various different threads in the narrative fabric display their complex network. All these carry other threads in the film narrative and add what is often defined as the 'extratextual' dimension to films – a problematic adjective which I will discuss at the end of this chapter. However, if we look at film from this distant perspective, a wider textual dimension emerges, and imagining a film as a textual field makes sense. While the textual field Hall terms 'Caribbean musics' is chiefly musical, films, however deaf film studies have been in the past century, are not chiefly visual. Soundtracks, as I shall illustrate later, 'play' difference into the supposedly British, Spanish, or Italian identities films offer. Without a careful consideration of a film's music all the differences its musical threads 'play' into its narrative fabric remain unheard. There are other – not exactly superficial – identities proliferating between the inside and the outside of those safely inscribed in the nations that films allegedly represent.

For *Trainspotting*'s Renton, being a junky is 'full-time business', more than resisting Britishness by being proudly Scottish and abhorring the English. Javi, Manu, and Rai share poverty in the anonymous urban periphery and never mention their being Spanish in *Barrio*. In *Radiofreccia*, those who participate in running their radio station are defined chiefly through their wanting something different than what is readily available, but again being Italian never becomes significant. However, like Hall suggests, mere 'recovery' work does not suffice to account for the identifications proliferating through these other aspects in the discourse surrounding films. Putting music back into films through a retrieval of their soundtracks without exploring the possibilities these allow for in the textual field, where audiences encounter a film's music and its other narrative threads, would be a fruitless undertaking. While a comprehensive account where all the potential engagements

between different audiences and a cinematic textual field are discussed remains an unreachable goal, I believe identifying even just some of these potential engagements can point towards the important differences that soundtracks 'play' into film. Besides digging out the textual materials soundtracks 'play' into films, I propose to explore their potential roles through a speculative reading through which I will begin to explore how audiences could use the materials songs bring into films. The paths for audiences' identifications I track will inevitably involve my subjectivity as a scholar and as a perceiver to a certain extent. Nonetheless, I believe approaching the films through a careful exploration – however ineluctably partial – of these potential identifications among countless other potential identifications can offer a new perspective on the study of national cinemas as the sites where identities are negotiated and not straightforwardly found.

Hall's observation about how 'identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past' (p. 213) signals the necessity for a consideration of a variety of potentially available positions and of how audiences influence their own positioning, and, I would argue, applies to whoever's past, present, or future films draw us to. Every perceiver is invited to inhabit the narrative world films construct, whether attracted into it through the process whereby connections between a perceiver and a character, situation, group, place, ideal, are established and sustained, or discouraged towards its margins because connections are interrupted or precluded through a threatening or unappealing character, situation, group, place, ideal. Where we are positioned by and position ourselves within a film's narrative world, as Kassabian shows in *Hearing Film*, is a process where film music plays a paramount role. Her ideas about 'tight' assimilating identifications as opposed to 'loose' affiliating identifications, and Hall's account about the passive 'being positioned by' as well as the active 'positioning oneself' align. In the epilogue of *Hearing Film* (2001), Kassabian distinguishes between the two identifications. 'Assimilating identifications track perceivers toward a rigid, tightly controlled position that tends to line up comfortably with aspects of dominant ideologies', which roughly matches the process Hall calls 'being positioned by', whereas 'Affiliating identifications track perceivers toward a more loosely defined position that groups, or affiliates, several different narrative positions within a fantasy scenario together' (p. 141), which, again, closely

resembles the process Hall calls 'positioning oneself'. Kassabian continues: 'In other words, it is not simply that assimilating identification is one and affiliating is several. More than numbers, the difference is one of direction: assimilating identifications narrow or tighten possibilities, while affiliating identifications open outward.' (p. 141). Positions are not either tight and passively assigned or loose and actively chosen, as both Hall and Kassabian suggest. Hence, films whose soundtracks channel audiences towards fewer possibilities are not straightforwardly nationalistic. However, films where popular songs offer textual materials for affiliating identifications allow for different nuances in their textual field, opening new narrative windows on the national identities which are often assumed to be articulated through national cinemas.

In the films I analyse there are a few instances where soundtracks weave a surface associative layer into the narrative, which leads towards another potential level where songs 'play' differences into the dominant national culture. Songs map different groupings in the textual field of a film. If a surface culture these different songs evoke and the primary meaning music carries enter a wider network where songs and other narrative threads intersect, the associative paths resulting from these crossings can ascribe a secondary meaning to primary meaning. Through the association linking a musical piece, the culture where the piece has its origins, and the group a character defined through the piece belongs to, soundtracks can 'play' differences in the film's textual field, placing these identity axes inside or outside the dominant national cultural identity the story implies. I will further elaborate the point I outline above in the following chapters. In the following section I shall discuss the national cinemas and the films I have chosen, and offer a few initial reflections about why the cultural identities in the national identities of these three countries deserve attention in the 1990s.

Britain, Spain, Italy, and Their Cinemas in the Late 1990s

In the opening paragraph I admit to finding the films I have selected interesting before knowing why. While writing, I began to realise how these films share more than compilation soundtracks tightly woven in the narrative and the five year period when they were released. These films are the cultural products of countries where different cultures both inside and outside their borders are a prominent feature of their societies. All three countries include different 'nations' and regions whose identities often obscure the imposed national identities of nation-states – Scotland and Wales in Britain, the Basque Country, Galicia, Andalusia, and Catalonia in Spain, the bilingual borderlands of Friuli Venezia-Giulia, Alto-Adige, and Valle D'Aosta, and the two major islands, Sardinia and Sicily, in Italy, a country where all regions are major sites for identity negotiation. Besides the institutionalised and tacitly known differences these nations and regions represent, there are other non-institutionalised differences. England and Italy share similarly prominent if diametrically opposed north-south divides. All these differences are defined via culture and geography; nation-states recognise and devolve power (British nations and Spanish autonomies), grant a special statute (Italian regions), and their peoples construct their identities primarily along divides between their regions, but these are generally thought of as the major differences through which cultural identities are articulated in the nations studied in this thesis. I thought I would encounter musical articulations of these recognised place-bound cultural formations, but differences often developed along other lines in the films I have chosen to analyse.

After realising these films' soundtracks articulated further non-place-bound divisions and defined their place inside and outside the given country's borders, the initial reasons for selecting British, Spanish, and Italian films released in the late 1990s confirmed the early sense I had about the cinemas of these three countries and their socio-cultural situation in this decade. Initially, I focused on finding films featuring prominent compilation soundtracks, and since the project's origins are predominantly in the field of film music studies, looking for soundtracks where the configuration that Kassabian's study indicates as the usual terrain where affiliating identifications develop was a primary concern. Before moving on to elaborating on

my period choice, there are other reasons for selecting these films which require a brief explanation.

As a guiding principle, I have decided to avoid films in which differences are chiefly drawn along lines of ethnicity and race – and therefore generally visible – because I thought these films' music would often aurally reinforce already visible differences through the corresponding ethnically and racially inflected music. While these films would represent interesting objects of study, ethnic and racial differences and their geographical origins are often conflated, which means discourse about ethnicity and race as a place-bound cultural identity already inscribes these differences outside the dominant national cultural identity. The films I chose represent a range of diverse non-place-bound cultural identities through different genre conventions and compilation soundtracks, thus inviting a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Differences are defined through class, consumer choices, gender, generation, lifestyles, sexuality, subcultures, in adaptations of cult novels, comedies, dramas, featuring blues, dance, Francophone *chanson*, hip hop, metal, raï, rap, rock, salsa, in the languages present in the films – and, often, other languages. While there are several films featuring a given cultural identity, different films offer different representations (see, for example, how homosexual males are swept under the rug in *The Full Monty*, repress their own sexuality in *Historias del Kronen*, and express themselves without a worry in the ideal world where *Krámpack* takes place). Besides prominent compilation soundtracks and popular films, variety was another important criterion for selecting these films, as the project seeks to explore popular songs' roles in shaping representations of a range of non-place-bound cultural identities. Focussing exclusively on the late-1990s was a restriction imposed because prominent compilation soundtracks begin to feature regularly in British, Spanish, and Italian films in those years.

British films start featuring popular songs in the 1950s, as Kevin Donnelly's (2001) comprehensive account clearly shows.[16] In the 1950s films begin to incorporate rock 'n' roll in the narrative through pop singers appearances (*Rock You Sinners*, 1957, *The Golden Disc*, 1958), *Beat Girl*, 1959, *Expresso Bongo*, 1959) and focus the narrative on the new British rock 'n' roll singers (*The Tommy Steele Story*,

[16] Unless otherwise stated, the films and the information I summarise below is based on the filmography discussed in Donnelly (2001).

1957, *Tommy the Toreador*, 1959) in the years following the release of *Rock Around the Clock* (1956). Films later defined as pop musicals (*The Young Ones*, 1961), pop vehicles (*Play It Cool*, 1962), and pop revues (*It's Trad, Dad!*, 1962) are still quite popular in the 1960s and adopt new musical phenomena, The Beatles (*A Hard Day's Night*, 1964, *Help!*, 1965) and Merseybeat (*Ferry Cross the Mersey*, 1964). 'Swinging London' films include musicals (*Smashing Time*, 1967), documentaries using current songs as source as well as dramatic sound (*Tonite Let's All Make Love in London*, 1967) and other films featuring dramatic songs and a one-act soundtrack (*Up the Junction*, 1967), which establish a trend further developed in the following years: films not necessarily about the popular music world featuring extensive pop soundtracks.

The 1970s saw the 'rock opera' of The Who (*Tommy*, 1975) and other similarly grand experiments (*The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, 1975) alongside the new takes on the pop-music-centred movie, including concert films, pop music nostalgia films (*That'll Be the Day*, 1973, *Stardust*, 1974) reminiscent of George Lucas's *American Graffiti* (1973), and Britain's own mod nostalgia movie, *Quadrophenia* (1979). British disco films (*The Stud*, 1978, *The Bitch*, 1979, *The Music Machine*, 1979, *The World is Full of Married Men*, 1979) – again moulded on their American precursor, *Saturday Night Fever* (1977) – and films on the punk subculture (*Jubilee*, 1978, *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle*, 1980) are the newer instances of a lasting trend: narratively justified compilation soundtracks. Popular songs, however, gradually begin to feature regularly in narrative films without a pop music theme (*Radio On*, 1979), which becomes established alongside other classical scoring practices in the 1980s. Besides popular musicians providing a score and sometimes writing songs for films, compilation soundtracks gradually enter British films (*Highlander*, 1986), but songs are often still given secondary roles (*Morons from Outer Space*, 1985, *The Supergrass*, 1985). Other 1980s films are noted for their musical nostalgia (*Withnail and I*, 1986), for their songs' cross-promotional value (*Rita, Sue and Bob Too*, 1986), for using songs pervasively (*Riding High*, 1981, *Sammie and Rosie Get Laid*, 1987), and for integrating songs in their narrative and film world without using any score (*Out of Order*, 1987, *Hawks*, 1988, *Dancin' Thru the Dark*, 1989).

Finally, in the 1990s the conscious Hollywood-style cross-promotion between films and their compilation soundtracks becomes a regular feature (*London Kills Me*, 1991, *Young Americans*, 1993, *Trainspotting*, 1996) and songs are often prominently present alongside a – sometimes subdued – score (*To Die For*, 1994, *Stonewall*, 1995, *Different For Girls*, 1996, *Twenty Four Seven*, 1997, *The Acid House*, 1998, *This Year's Love*, 1999). Films conveying 1960s nostalgia through 'golden oldies' include *Scandal* (1989), *The Krays* (1990), *Nothing Personal* (1995) and *Resurrection Man* (1998), and, while *Twin Town* (1997) appears among the films integrating current pop songs in the film world, its use not only of several 'golden oldies' but also of traditional Welsh songs makes it an interesting example to study. *The Full Monty* (1997), too, crosses different musical types, including old disco hit songs and brass bands. Films featuring non-mainstream pop music include *Hardware* (1990), *Trainspotting* (1996), and *My Son the Frantic* (1997), while *Peter's Friends* (1992), *Boston Kickout* (1995), and *Career Girls* (1997) share a premature 1980s audiovisual nostalgia. Crucially, Donnelly notes how:

> the use of pop song compilations became one of the dominant musical formats for British cinema, much as it had become for American cinema. Unless films were set before the 1950s, or wished to delineate a distinctively 'upper-class' milieu with classical music, they would regularly use selections of pop songs.
>
> (Donnelly 2001, p. 161)

Among the films featuring compilation soundtracks are *Shopping* (1993), *Butterfly Kiss* (1994), *Mad Dogs and Englishmen* (1994), the afore-mentioned *Boston Kickout* (1995), *Blue Juice* (1994), *Fever Pitch* (1996), and *Trainspotting* (1996), which Donnelly tentatively defines as '[p]erhaps the most noteworthy film for its use of pop songs' and 'the most literate film of the 1990s in pop music terms' (2001, p. 162). *Trainspotting*'s multi-genre pop music compilation and its portrayal of a non-dominant cultural identity make it an interesting example for the present project. While *Trainspotting*'s scoring choices epitomise a broader trend, the other two films I chose (*The Full Monty* and *Twin Town*) offer a similarly interesting combination of multi-genre compilation and non-dominant cultural identity I require for the project.

Compilation soundtracks develop through the 1980s and 1990s, not only in quality but also in quantity. Donnelly's account shows a sharp rise in the number of

films he lists as using popular music beginning in 1996. The following years feature similar numbers to 1996, a trend which peaks in 1997 and continues until 1999.[17] While the general boom in the number of film releases in the late 1990s has obvious effects on the numbers I quote, Donnelly notes how popular songs are a pervasive feature in these films:

> There was something of an explosion in British film production in the late 1990s. By the millennium, Britain was producing more films than it had for decades, and almost all of them seemed to include pop songs one way or another. The only exception were period films or costume dramas.
>
> (Donnelly 2001, p. 164-5)

Earlier, however, Donnelly makes a few qualitative remarks about where popular songs stand in the soundtracks of 1990s British films, observing how 'it could be argued that since 1990 British films have begun to exploit pop songs to a far greater degree than previously' (p. 153). His remarks about how '[t]he use of foregrounded pop songs as an occasional effect within films was by now a well-established strategy' (p. 154) further justify using 1990s British films for the present project and the figures highlight the late-1990s as the time of highest concentration of popular music in British films.

While popular songs are still a comparatively disregarded feature of Spanish cinema, there are indications of similar moments in the development of compilation soundtracks in Spain. The following account lacks a broad scholarly basis on which to build a comprehensive picture, but nonetheless reviews the key moments in the history of popular songs in Spanish films.[18] In the 1930s Andalusian songs feature in several *españoladas* including *Rosario la cortijera* (1935), *El gato montés* (1935), *María de la O* (1936), and are carefully woven in the films of Benito Perojo (*La bodega* (*Wine Cellars*), 1930, *Susana tiene un secreto* (*Susana Has a Secret*), 1933, *¡Se ha fugado un preso!* (*A Prisoner Has Escaped*), 1933, *Crisis mundial* (*World Crisis*), 1934, *Rumbo al Cairo* (*Bound for Cairo*), 1935, *Suspiros de España* (*Sighs*

[17] Although Donnelly's list includes co-productions, the following figures for the 1990s evidence 1996 as something of a watershed (12 films featuring popular music in 1990; 16 in 1991; 17 in 1992; 17 in 1993; 24 in 1994; 21 in 1995; 38 in 1996; 55 in 1997; 44 in 1998; 43 in 1999) (2001, pp. 166-232).

[18] Unless otherwise stated, the films and the information I summarise below is based on the filmography discussed by Fraile-Prieto (2008 and 2010).

of Spain), 1938, *Mariquilla Terremoto*, 1939, *La verbena de la Paloma* (*Fair of the Dove*), 1935). Folkloric films featuring stars singing songs in the Spanish popular folkloric repertoires of *copla*, *flamenco*, and *zarzuela* are recurrent in the 1940s and still present through the 1950s (*El pescador de coplas*, 1953, *Sucedió en Sevilla* (*It Happened in Sevilla*), 1954, *La pícara molinera*, 1954, *El genio alegre*, 1956, *Lola la Piconera* (*Lola, the Coalgirl*), 1951, *Carmen la de Ronda* (*A Girl Against Napoleon* or *The Devil Made a Woman*), 1959). In the 1960s a cinematic genre centred on the singing child prodigy becomes popular, and Marisol, a young woman who sings flamenco and pop songs (generally bearing a clear Anglo-Saxon influence), stars in several films between 1960 and 1985 (Triana-Toribio 2003, p. 91). Films start using a mixture of folkloric songs and current Spanish rock by El Dúo Dinámico (*Botón de ancla*, 1960, *Noches del universo*, 1964, *Búsqueme a esa chica* (*Find That Girl*), 1964, *Escala en Tenerife*, 1964, *Una chica para dos*, 1966) and other pop bands including Los gatos negros y Soledad Miranda (*Los gatos negros* (*The Black Cats*), 1963), Micky y los Tonys (*Megatón ye-yé*, 1964), Los Sírex (*El último sábado*, 1966), Los Bravos (*Los chicos con las chicas*, 1967, *¡Dame un poco de amor!* (*Bring a Little Loving*), 1968), Los Canarios (*Peppermint Frappé*, 1967), Los Iberos (*Topical Spanish*, 1969).

In the 1970s there are a few politicised films featuring singers who represented the *Nova Cançó* (a Catalan nationalist musical current against the restrictive rules imposed in the Franco years on Catalan culture), including Joan Manuel Serrat (*Palabras de amor*, 1969, *La larga agonía de los peces fuera del agua*, 1969, and *Mi profesora particular* (*My Private Teacher*), 1973), Patxi Andion (*El libro del buen amor*, 1975) Luis Eduardo Aute (*Mi hija Hildegart* (*My Daughter Hildegart*), 1977). Films about young delinquents on the edges of urban areas known as *cine quinqui* are another 1970s sub-genre, boasting prominent soundtracks featuring popular gypsy bands and using cross-promotion between films and music (*Perros callejeros* (*Street Warriors*), 1977, *Perros callejeros 2: busca y captura* (*Street Warriors II*), 1979, *Los ultimos golpes del Torete*, 1985, *Yo, El Vaquilla*, 1985, *Deprisa, deprisa* (*Fast, Fast* or *Faster, Faster*), 1980) (Whittaker, forthcoming). The 1980s are the 'Movida' years and Pedro Almodóvar's films are a milestone in the development of popular songs' integration in Spanish films. Popular songs not only carry meaning accrued through their existence in culture, but also

represent a narrative element in the films of Almodóvar (*Pepi, Luci, Bom y otras chicas del montón* (*Pepi, Luci, Bom and Other Girls Like Mom*), 1980, *Laberinto de pasiones* (*Labyrinth of Passion*), 1982, *Carne Trémula* (*Live Flesh*), 1997), which often feature eclectic compilation soundtracks.

In the 1990s Spanish films integrate popular songs in the new instances of known formats (musical films, music-related films, and pop vehicles) and explore new templates for integrating songs (films using music to build identities and those providing a parodic outlook on identities through music). Fraile-Prieto (2008) organises contemporary Spanish films along these loose groupings[19] and notes how these often overlap (e.g. music-related films using music to build identities). Among the music-related films she discusses there are *Historias del Kronen* (1995), *Mensaka* (1998), *Shacky Carmine* (1999). I chose to analyse *Historias del Kronen* because among the music-related films of those years it spans not only different functions but also different musical materials, which, as I discuss later, participate in interesting representations of non-dominant cultural identities. Films using songs to portray local identities include *Barrio* (1998), *Flores de otro mundo* (*Flowers from Another World*), (1999)*, El bola* (*Pellet* or *Wooden Ball*), (2000)*, Bwana* (1996)*, Se buscan fulmontis* (1999). Among these, *Barrio* offers a diverse range of prominent songs through which non-place-bound, non-dominant cultural identities are constructed. Parodic films using the identity connotations songs carry include *El día de la Bestia* (*The Day of the Beast*), (1995), *Torrente el brazo tonto de la ley* (*Torrente, the Dumb Arm of the Law*), (1998), and *Muertos de risa* (*Dying of Laughter*), (1999), and while these are interesting objects for a study about songs and Spanish films, their musical range is often limited. Finally, fewer films predominantly feature songs in other languages, usually English (*Salto al Vacío* (*Jump Into the Void*), 1995, *Solas* (*Alone*), 1999, *Krámpack*, 2000). Among these, I chose *Krámpack* for its extensive use of a variety of popular songs.

Just as Donnelly (2001) reports growing numbers of films using popular music alongside songs' greater narrative integration, scholarship about Spanish film music in the 1990s registers a clear upsurge in the number of soundtracks featuring popular songs and the narrative possibilities these offer. In the passage discussed

[19] Musical; portrait of settings related to musical cultures; description of local identities; dissemination for musicians, pop or rock bands on screen; parody of identity connotations (2008, pp. 330-1).

earlier, Fraile-Prieto cites Heriberto and Sergio Navarro's dismissal of the mushrooming soundtracks featuring popular songs, which they deem to be a regrettable phenomenon in the 1980s and 1990s. Later, Fraile-Prieto notes how:

> Desde los años ochenta, se ha dado un incremento de canciones de estilos adscritos a las músicas populares urbanas, lo que aporta más posibilidades para introducir nuevos códigos, a la vez que amplia el espectro de modos de definir identidades concretas. Es importante señalar que la articulación y rearticulación de significados procedentes de diversos estilos no es una novedad en nuestro cine: desde que el *pop* hizo su aparición en España, los rasgos sonoros nacionales se infiltraron en toda clase de estilos, muchas veces sin una especial necesidad social. Ya en la década de los sesenta y setenta comienza a haber una voluntad de internacionalización y exportación del producto autóctono con acento español, pero con talante de modernidad, aparte de una vertiente de integración y recreación del *pop* por medio de la ironía, lo exagerado, lo espectacular, una línea que permanece muy presente a partir de los años noventa.
> (Since the 1980s there was an increase in songs in styles ascribed to urban popular musics, which gives more possibilities to introduce new codes, at the same time as it widens the spectrum of modes to define concrete identities. It is important to signal that the articulation and rearticulation of meanings derived from different styles is nothing new to our cinema: since pop made its appearance in Spain, national sound features were infiltrated by all kinds of styles, often without a special social necessity. Already in the 1960s and 1970s there begins to be a will for internationalisation and exportation of the autochthonous product with a Spanish accent, but in a modern mood, as well as an aspect of integration and recreation of pop through irony, exaggeration, spectacle – a trend which remains very present starting from the 1990s.)
>
> (Fraile-Prieto 2008, p. 386)

While Fraile-Prieto locates the rise of popular songs in the 1980s, her remarks about the combination between different stylistic threads and sound characteristics in the cinema of Spain, and about the extension and consolidation of this trend in the 1990s corroborate my selection insofar as several soundtracks for feature films made in those years would offer aural materials for affiliating identifications. Furthermore, the films she cites in the section about popular songs in the 1990s are predominantly made between 1995 and 2000. Fraile-Prieto's reflections suggest another key feature present in the films studied in this thesis. Perhaps not all the nations represented in the films are articulated through a musical style bearing a nationalist meaning prior to its use on the soundtrack. However, sometimes a given musical style has not undergone integration and recreation through songs circulating in the same cultural

formation where a given film is experienced. In these instances, the way songs participate in the audiovisual narrative of a film gives them – and sometimes their style – another level of specificity, not necessarily place-bound, but often related to a precise socio-cultural group in the film world, and sometimes related to nations through a secondary association. Rock in *Historias del Kronen* may not display the national features Fraile-Prieto talks about through sound, but the different degrees of integration and recreation producing different kinds of rock bands in the Spanish context until the 1990s map differences in the film world that can evoke differences in the dominant national identity.

Finally, in one of the few scholarly discussions about Italian film music, Emanuele D'Onofrio (2008) gives a brief outline of the changes in Italian compilation soundtracks and notes how films start featuring popular songs extensively in the 1990s. After a brief mention of a handful of 1960s films where the *canzonette*[20] prevailed, D'Onofrio discusses the irregular development towards today's Italian compilation soundtracks:

> Popular songs will return in the late 1970s in *Figlio delle stelle* (Carlo Vanzina, 1979). But it is from the early 1980s, with the emergence of rock-enthusiast filmmakers, firstly Carlo Verdone with *Borotalco* (1982) and Gabriele Salvatores, with *Sogno di una notte d'estate* (1983), that rock music began to make more consistent inroads into films. This trend has exploded over the past decade, when this music has often become the representational form to emphasise the youth perspective, for example in *Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo* (Enza Negroni, 1996).
>
> (D'Onofrio 2008, p. 112)

The 1990s are again singled out as a momentous decade for popular songs and, while D'Onofrio talks about rock songs in the early films of rock-enthusiast filmmakers, neither the films mentioned nor those directors' later films limit their soundtracks to rock. I am going to build on the films mentioned by D'Onofrio and offer a brief outline of significant moments in the history of popular songs in Italian films.

Richard Dyer (2006) notes how several neo-realist films use current Italian popular songs, Latin American and swing music (*Ossessione* (*Obsession*), 1942, *Il Cammino della Speranza* (*Path of Hope* or *The Road to Hope*), 1950, *Senza Pietà* (*Without Pity*), 1948, *Tombolo Paradiso Nero* (*Tombolo Black Paradise*), 1947,

[20] Literally 'little songs', *canzonette* are popular, light songs (Filippa 1996).

Sotto il Sole di Roma (*Under the Sun of Rome*), 1947, *Roma Città Aperta* (*Rome Open City*), 1945, *Proibito Rubare* (*No Stealing* or *Hey Boy*), 1948) (p. 32-3). Folk songs are performed in Giuseppe de Santis's films *Caccia tragica* (*The Tragic Hunt*, 1948), *Riso amaro* (*Bitter Rice*, 1949), and *Non c'è pace tra gli ulivi* (*Under the Olive Tree* or *No Peace under the Olive Tree*, 1950), and other films feature farm labourers' songs (*Il mulino del Po* (*The Mill on the Po*), 1949), the songs of builders, housewives and fishermen (*La terra trema* (*The Earth Trembles*), 1948), and partisans' songs (*Achtung! Banditi!* (*Attention! Bandits!*), 1951) (Dyer 2006, pp. 30-1). In the 1950s, a key genre for popular songs appears and becomes established as a favourite among young audiences in the 1960s: the *musicarello*. These are the Italian pop vehicles, usually named after songs and featuring singers including Adriano Celentano (*I ragazzi del juke-box* (*The Jukebox Kids*), 1959, *Urlatori alla sbarra* (*Howlers of the Dock*), 1960), Mina (*Urlatori alla sbarra* (*Howlers of the Dock*), 1960, *Io bacio… tu baci*, 1961, *Appuntamento in Riviera*, 1962), Bobby Solo (*Una lacrima sul viso*, 1964), Gianni Morandi (*In ginocchio da te*, 1964, *Non son degno di te*, 1964, *Se non avessi più te*, 1965, *Mi vedrai tornare*, 1965, *Chimera*, 1968), Caterina Caselli (*Perdono*, 1966, *Nessuno mi può giudicare*, 1966), Rita Pavone (*Rita, la figlia americana*, 1965, *Rita, la zanzara* (*Rita the Mosquito*), 1966), Albano Carrisi and Romina Power (*Il suo nome è Donna Rosa*, 1969). Despite being a minor sub-genre in the Italian context, the 'road movie' finds one successful expression in Dino Risi's *Il sorpasso* (*The Easy Life*, 1962), which has a few Italian popular songs on the soundtrack.

The directors D'Onofrio cites are among those who start using songs in the late 1970s and sustain compilation soundtracks through the 1980s, until the 1990s' boost. However, Nanni Moretti is a notable absence. Among his early films, *Bianca* (1984), *La messa è finita* (*The Mass Is Ended*, 1985), and *Palombella Rossa* (*Red Lob*, 1989) use Italian popular songs. Later, his films feature a wider musical range and, sometimes, extensive soundtracks (*Caro diario* (*Dear Diary*), 1993, *Aprile* (*April*), 1998). Director Carlo Vanzina and brother Enrico Vanzina, whose films are largely disregarded for their formulaic stories and unimaginative character types, write and produce hit after hit featuring memorable compilation soundtracks. *Sapore di mare* (*Time for Loving*, 1982), *Vacanze di Natale* (1983) and its sequels, *Vacanze in America* (1984) and their other holiday films, and *Yuppies: I giovani di successo*

(1986) are among the Vanzina films including several current Italian and Anglo-American pop songs. Gabriele Salvatores's early films feature fewer songs, generally performed by popular Italian singer-songwriters (*Marrakech Express*, 1989, *Turné* (*On Tour*), 1990), but his later films use a wider musical range (*Puerto Escondido*, 1992, *Sud* (*South*), 1993, *Nirvana*, 1997, *Denti* (*Teeth*), 2000). Popular music appears in several Carlo Verdone's films, including *Acqua e Sapone* (*Soap and Water*, 1983) *Compagni di scuola* (1988) *Stasera a casa di Alice* (*Tonight at Alice's*, 1990). Again, while his early films feature songs predominantly by Italian rock acts like Stadio and Vasco Rossi, his later films include a wider range (*Maledetto il giorno che t'ho incontrato* (*Damned the Day I Met You*), 1991, *Al lupo al lupo* (*Wolf! Wolf!*), 1992, *Perdiamoci di vista* (*Let's Not Keep in Touch*), 1994, *Viaggi di nozze*, 1995, *Sono pazzo di Iris Blond*, 1996, *Gallo Cedrone*, 1998, *C'era un cinese in coma* (*A Chinese in a Coma*), 2000). Among these directors I chose Verdone because, while he later becomes generally regarded as a tragicomic auteur of Italian cinema, his 1990s still sit in the middle ground between the Vanzinas' films' 'trash' connotation and the 'art' value several critics attribute to Salavatores's films. While *Sono pazzo di Iris Blond* might stand out among the other films I analyse, the combination between assertive females and musical variety makes *Iris Blond* a fascinating example for the present project.

In the 1990s a growing variety of popular songs is heard not only in films by music enthusiasts, but also by other directors including Francesco Nuti (*Donne con le gonne* (*Women in Skirts*), 1991, *Il signor quindici palle* (*Mr. Fifteen Balls*), 1998), Paolo Virzì (*Ferie d'agosto* (*August Vacation*), 1994, *Ovosodo* (*Hardboiled Egg*), 1997), Daniele Luchetti (*La scuola* (*School*), 1995), Christian De Sica (*Uomini uomini uomini* (*Men Men Men*), 1995), Antonello Grimaldi (*Il cielo è sempre più blu* (*Bits and Pieces*), 1996), Leonardo Pieraccioni (*I laureati* (*The Graduates*), 1995, *Il ciclone* (*The Cyclone*), 1996, *Fuochi d'artificio* (*Fireworks*), 1997, *Il pesce innamorato*, 1999), Enza Negroni (*Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo*, 1996), comedians Aldo, Giovanni e Giacomo and Massimo Venier (*Tre uomini e una gamba* (*Three Men and a Leg*), 1997, *Così è la vita* (*That's Life*), 1998, *Chiedimi se sono felice* (*Ask Me If I Am Happy*), 2000), Riccardo Milani (*La Guerra degli Antò*, 1999). While the 1990s still see several films featuring songs of a single artist, compilation soundtracks including different bands are a growing trend. Among the

films using extensive compilation soundtracks I chose *Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo* for its musical variety and unusual audiovisual representations of a group of disillusioned teenagers. Finally, while there are directors who are known for being music-enthusiasts, the 1990s see the cinematic debut of a rocker behind the film camera. Italian singer-songwriter Luciano Ligabue directs his first feature *Radiofreccia* in 1998 and, after achieving significant success, makes another movie two years later (*Da zero a dieci* (*From Zero to Ten*), 2000). I decided to analyse *Radiofreccia* because its predominantly non-Italian songs perform interesting functions in the small town Italian setting where the story takes place.

My film choices require one final explanation. Despite knowing D'Onofrio and sharing reflections about Italian film music and society on quite a few occasions, the overlap between films mentioned and written about in his thesis and in mine is largely unintentional. Perhaps, as I argue later, *Radiofreccia* is a predictable one for a study about film music, but the films Carlo Verdone made in the 1990s are not all obvious choices and Enza Negroni's debut feature was not too successful among critics. The overlap between the films I chose and the directors and films D'Onofrio talks about in the passage I quote above indicates a common ground for Italian film music studies where, despite sailing independently and without a comprehensive map among the often disregarded 1990s popular films and their equally disregarded compilations soundtracks, two researchers reach a similar shore. While neither D'Onofrio's nor the present project can offer a comprehensive history of popular songs in Italian films, following Dyer's above-mentioned article and mapping the origins and evolution of compilation soundtracks would represent a fundamental and overdue stage for Italian film music studies. Similarly, while Fraile-Prieto discusses popular songs alongside original composed score, she notes how compilation soundtracks are still largely under-researched and deserve further scholarly attention in the Spanish context.

In the three 'national' cinemas I have chosen, compilation soundtracks achieved a whole new level of integration in the 1990s, as well as becoming more common. Narrowing the selection further to the late 1990s was initially unconscious. The films I found would offer interesting cases for the present study all had their cinema release between 1996 and 2000. Since the secondary criterion in the selection process was including the popular cinemas of Britain, Spain, and Italy, I limited my

selection further to represent the variety of significant hit films featuring prominent compilation soundtracks in these years. However, these three countries present further interesting characteristics besides the soundtracks of their feature films in the 1990s. Britain, Spain, and Italy undergo significant socio-cultural changes in those years, which makes considering how these films offer textual materials for different identifications exceptionally fascinating. While the changes occurring in the three countries are not among the primary reasons for selecting the late-1990s, the influence these uncertain times potentially had for the films made in those years is a not insignificant fringe benefit for a project on audiovisual representations of a range of non-place-bound cultural identities. As the broad effects these changes had are often present in the films I analyse, I am going to provide a brief contextualisation about the socio-cultural changes affecting Britain, Spain, and Italy between the years preceding 1995 and 2000.

Britain reaches the agonising end of a difficult 18 years of Conservative rule to enter a new era under New Labour, whose efforts to re-brand Britain bring its national identity under close examination. Devolution for Scotland and Wales finally becomes a reality after being decided in the 1997 referenda and later implemented in the 1999 elections for the first Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly (Marwick 2003, p. 421), but through the years preceding the political formalisation of these national divisions the media spotlight was on the debates pushing for their recognition. While the other divisions (those the Thatcher years had triggered and those originating outside Britain) are far too complex to study in depth in the summary I provide, there are a few broad changes worth talking about further since their effects are sometimes present in the films I analyse. Social historian Arthur Marwick notes how ‘certain clusters of issues across the years from 1989 to 1995 consistently reveal Britain as a more divided nation than at any time since the aftermath of the First World War.’ (2003, p. 340). The mid-1990s are difficult times for a country going through inner political and other broader changes at the painful end of a troublesome fifteen years after ‘a wider framework of economic, technological and global factors, forming in the eighties but only fully in place in the nineties, [introduces] new insecurities into the lives of people of all social classes’ (p. 340). However far new insecurities can reach, class divisions, as Marwick later reminds us (p. 382), are still quite prominent. The three British films I chose to

analyse amply display class divisions, which are often articulated through other divides.

Consumer culture becomes a renewed component for the negotiation of identity. In the introduction to *British Cultural Studies* (2001), editors David Morley and Kevin Robins point out how:

> The rise of shopping culture, and the physical 'rise', in the place of old industries, of new temples of consumerism—the shopping malls—has been one of the key stories of recent years. Consumerism and the retail industry are now central to how we see ourselves. The ways in which we are catered to as consumers and the range of available identities that we can now buy 'off the peg' has extended dramatically.
>
> (Morley and Robins 2001, p. 10)

Consumerism becomes central for the delineation of precise identities, but consuming as a lifestyle statement defines broader identities, and often becomes a general cinematic signifier for a Thatcherite ethos. On the other hand, non-participation in the consumerist culture pervading British society often comes to signify a character's rejection of those values. Those who are non-consumers in the films I examine are sometimes outside consumerism because their lifestyle choices prevent their participation in the practices related to it, but often because their chronic joblessness precludes the acquisition of lifestyle-related goods. Marwick dedicates a few pages to the violent riots that affect different parts of Britain in the first half of the 1990s involving the recession-hit, alienated, jobless, white and black youth, who channel their frustration towards delinquency and who clash against police forces on a few occasions (2003, pp. 394-8). These riots bring further bleakness for those already going through difficult times in which inner divisions blight the lower class. How the blame for these violent riots was distributed between the civilians and the police forces is a controversial issue, but the youth Marwick evasively describes and the young and adult men in the films I analyse share the disenfranchised condition described above. How the celluloid non-working class negotiate their condition, as I will discuss later, positions their members differently in the social landscape they inhabit.

For Spain the 1990s are a momentous decade, beginning among a general climate of celebration for the 500th anniversary of Columbus's first journey to America in 1992, which saw the Olympic Games in Barcelona and the World Fair in

Seville, but closing among further ETA terrorist threats after hopes of a permanent ceasefire are shattered. Halfway through, Spain too votes for a new government and, after 14 years under socialist Prime Minister Felipe González, conservative José Maria Aznar and his Partido Popular win the general elections, which marks the start of a difficult spell for the country. After several years where political stability had allowed the country to join NATO and the EEC, the Aznar years bring a cutback for government expenditure, pay freezes, and a lengthy and yet fruitless negotiation between the government and ETA, who suspend their ceasefire after talks stall.

Historian Santos Juliá describes Aznar's electoral victory as 'the end of a long period of "light and dark"' (2006, p. 119) and gives a brief but comprehensive account about those years, emphasising a few key factors which, while not prominently addressed in the films I analyse later, provide a helpful contextualisation for understanding Spain and its struggles in the 1990s:

> During this period, democracy in Spain had been firmly consolidated and the specter of military intervention obliterated; Spain had opened its market to the international world and had become fully integrated, culturally and politically, into the European Union; it had experienced great economic growth, but had been unable to resolve its major problem – unemployment – which, at times, reached alarming proportions; it had satisfied the demands for autonomy of its different regions and nationalities, but had not resolved the problem of Basque terrorism; and it had modernized much of its infrastructure and many of its customs, but had not been able to rid itself of that strange mixture of cliques and family interests which, as in so many Latin countries, runs deep in the fabric of the political culture.
>
> (Juliá 2006, p. 119)

While his closing remarks for a whole section about the Spanish situation between 1975 and 1996 are the accelerated historical montage where the picture often loses depth, these few sentences encapsulate the key ups and downs, emphasising how, despite integration, a growing economy, increased recognition for its inner regions and nations, and general modernisation, a few chronic blockages are not removed. In the films I analyse, European integration and Basque terrorism are briefly mocked, while the effects unemployment has for those outside Spain's newly-found prosperity are shown against news reports about the economy growing, the country's new international profile, and its crowded beaches. Juliá talks about modernising customs, but attitudes about gender are not addressed. Chris Perriam notes how

'[d]espite the much-vaunted opening-up in matters of sexual politics and behaviour, there has been little space for alternative sexualities in the traditional media.' (1995, p. 394). Almodóvar's films may offer revolutionary representations and carve a space for these alternative sexualities, but other popular films represent homosexuals – and generally all those who challenge patriarchal norms – quite differently. The films I analyse offer a range of interesting if often diverging representations where homosexuals and other threats for the patriarchal order are defined through similar songs.

There is a dark side to these rapid changes and their unnatural speed, which several critics emphasise in their writing about those years. Rosa Montero's essay 'Political Transition and Cultural Democracy: Coping with the Speed of Change' (1995) and Peter Evans's piece 'Back to the Future: Cinema and Democracy' (1995), for example, instantly highlight these ideas about the rapid changes affecting Spain, and Montero notes how '[t]he incredible speed of these changes is perhaps the most striking feature of modern Spain' (p. 315). Later, she addresses the downsides these vertiginous changes involve:

> The day before yesterday we were poor and now we are not, and the bonanza seems to have gone to our heads, bringing out in us all the defects of the new rich: pretentiousness, ostentation, superficiality, selfishness, and a rejection of the poor worthy of the new convert, manifested in an increase in xenophobia and racism.
>
> (Montero 1995, p. 319)

Again, all these factors are somehow present in the films I discuss, often as ambient phenomena, but their signs are perceived. Through their stories, the films explore the shadows in the brave new Spain and their songs construct different positions vis-à-vis the country's renewed image.

Finally, in the 1990s Italy experiences significant political changes, which accentuates various divisions among Italians, from their views about parties and politicians, to their attitudes towards immigration. The first few years of the 1990s see the formation of the Lega Nord – northern Italy's 'secessionist-federalist' party – in 1991, the post-Cold War ideological metamorphosis of Italy's Partito Comunista (PCI) into the centre-left Partito Democratico della Sinistra (PDS) – from which PCI's left-wing detach to form Rifondazione Comunista – in 1991, and Berlusconi's

brand new Forza Italia party in 1993. Under the newly-voted[21] 'first-past-the-post' electoral system, Berlusconi forms alliances with Lega Nord and other right-wing parties, and his Polo delle Libertà coalition obtains a significant victory in 1994. In the *Tangentopoli* (literally 'bribesville') years, corruption scandals involving Italy's administrative, political, and business élites start to surface as magistrates investigate several cases between 1992 and 1996, unveiling the scale corruption had reached in the country. Simon Parker aptly describes these years '[a]fter the 1989 collapse of East European communism [as a time when] Italy began to experience a series of tremors in its political geology which by 1993 had become a full-scale earthquake' (1996, p. 113). But the turmoil affects other aspects of Italian society. In 1992 anti-mafia magistrates Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino are the victims of two different Mafia-led bomb attacks, a tragedy which, alongside the gradual discoveries *Tangentopoli* reveals about connections between government and organised crime, increases the general climate of shock and disbelief about Italy's rotting state. The years following all these adjustments, tragedies, and revelations bring political instability, several government changes and five different Prime Ministers between 1994 and 2000. Despite a growing economy, not all Italians benefit. Jonathan Dunnage notes how:

> The growth of economic wealth during the eighties and nineties, though allowing a rise in family income for the majority of Italians and the growth of a new high-income middle class, was achieved at the cost of economic restructuring which destroyed working-class strongholds of employment.
>
> (Dunnage 2002, p. 202)

While there are clear differences between the Italian, Spanish, and British economies, societies, and class systems, the way unequally distributed opportunities widen the gap between working classes and middle classes, and its effects are perhaps quite similar. Rosa Montero's (1995) remarks about how growing class disparity among Spaniards affects their attitudes about the 'lower' Other could equally apply to Italian and British societies.

Finally, despite the battles won in the 1970s, attitudes towards women are still largely unchanged. Luisa Passerini (1996) discusses every important

[21] The new electoral system is approved in the referendum of 18 April 1993.

achievement for women in the 1970s, but concludes her essay admitting how nothing has changed substantially:

> Women have become more visible in a range of places and situations, and more visible to one another. For all that, Italy remains a country in which gender relations are still often formed in the mould of an underlying masculinism – old-fashioned or newfangled, covert or manifest – and this masculinism both sustains old traditions and invents new ones.
>
> (Passerini 1996, p. 157)

Sono pazzo di Iris Blond, as I will argue in Chapter Four, sadly mirrors the situation she describes. While the confusion and disillusionment Italy faces in the 1990s are not overtly articulated in the other films, the climate these years bring emerges through subtler aspects. Despite being middle class and still a teenage student, the protagonist of *Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo* and his friends reject the choices leading towards joining the 'new high-income middle class' Dunnage describes. The way *Radiofreccia*'s free radio station closes without celebrating its eighteenth birthday in 1993 shows a vague sense of a climate where the protagonist's ideas about being different faintly disappear. Maybe films made in Italy between 1995 and 1998 had not yet processed the chaotic changes experienced in the early-1990s, but the effects those ideological earthquakes had are somehow present in the films.

A Few Words About Words

Before I go on to analyse the films there are a few terminological questions requiring a brief explanation. The most common terminology to talk about the place of music in film is the distinction between diegetic and non-diegetic or extra-diegetic music borrowed from narratology. Diegetic music is implied in the film world, in other words that which is also heard by the characters. Non-diegetic or extra-diegetic music is the so-called background music, that which is not heard by the characters. Such distinction, although widely used, is unsatisfactory, because between the diegetic and non-diegetic sound dimensions there are nuances that the absence of intermediate terms can leave untheorised and that other related terms designating a single dimension somewhere between the two established positions, (metadiegetic, ambidiegetic) do not exhaust. Furthermore, the idea that music does not participate in the creation of the film world suggested by the term non-diegetic makes its points of reference even more unsatisfactory. Kassabian (2001) adopts the terminology used by several film music composers and proposes source music to replace diegetic music, dramatic scoring to replace non-diegetic, and source scoring, which represents the music that does not belong to either one or the other dimension. Throughout the thesis I will adopt the terminology proposed by Kassabian and add potential new nuances to Kassabian's terminological stock.

Elsewhere (Boschi 2008, p. 99) I argue against using the adjective 'extratextual' to define the meaning(s) popular songs can carry into the textual field of a film. Calling songs and their meaning 'extratextual' seems to situate the textual world every musical piece can evoke somewhere outside the cinematic textual field. I propose using 'paratextual' instead, where the prefix *para-* is taken to express ideas of song being 'alongside', 'beside', 'near', rather than 'beyond' the cinematic textual field. By calling these songs and their meaning 'paratextual' I suggest a different understanding of compilation soundtracks whereby the textual world songs represent is thought of as a basic component of a film's textual field, not the outside element temporarily allowed into the film which 'extratextual' seems to suggest. Throughout the thesis I will refer to every meaning songs 'play' into the filmic narrative as 'paratextual'.

Finally, the way I attribute any adjective designating nationality to films, songs, and other cultural artefacts needs a brief explanation. The films I study are generally described as British, Spanish, or Italian by critics, academics, and audiences. Where there are other prominent territorial affiliations arising in the discourse surrounding the films I will acknowledge these, but still try looking and listening for other, non-place-bound identifications. Besides being productions of these countries, all the stories I chose feature a British, Spanish, or Italian protagonist(s). I decided to focus on films about a character whose nationality matches the country because I think focussing on the way music 'plays' differences in the films via a British, Spanish, or Italian character would highlight differences and divisions among the perceived 'us' and not between 'us and them'. Since the music surrounding the protagonist(s) contributes to positioning him/her in a cultural identity inside or outside given nations, talking about songs in terms of nationality is often unavoidable. Through the following pages I shall attribute nationality to songs based on the performer(s)'s nationality. However, where the songs and their performer(s) can bring more than one dimension and project more than one culture on the character, I will acknowledge and discuss every pertinent meaning songs 'play' into the narrative. Any other cultural artefacts and practices shall be defined by the rules I apply to songs.

CHAPTER TWO

A Study of Popular Songs in Three British Films

British cinema enjoyed a general renaissance through the 1990s. However controversial its reach was, the '90s saw several different takes on Britishness and Britain being brought into the limelight, revealing its culture's nuances to both domestic and international audiences. All the British-set films of the 1990s portray the place where their stories develop from a different angle and, while their sum does not produce a comprehensive picture of Britain, the identities offered and their narrative negotiation deserve further consideration.

Current scholarly writing about British films addresses questions of national identity using an extensive range of perspectives, generally without leaving any significant periods uncovered and reserving special attention to fast-changing times like the 1990s when, as Moya Luckett notes: 'Discussions of contemporary national identity cannot […] escape the monumental nature of constitutional changes deriving from a devolved UK with closer links to the European Union' and continues: 'Nineties films articulate this awareness of a national identity in flux, producing multiple visions of the nation for an increasingly regionalised home market.' (2000, p. 91). Another event Luckett talks about is 1997's long-awaited political shift, which brought not only a change of the guard in Westminster, but also dragged Britain's image under the spotlight after New Labour's nation designing 'Cool Britannia' plan fizzled out and yet did enter British consciousness, pushing everybody towards a greater awareness of what Luckett appropriately terms 'a nation's *international* identity' (p. 92) at a time when the world was watching – and listening. Thus it is no wonder that Britishness and its 1990s cinematic representations provide interesting materials for scholarly discussions about identities if we think about the variety these changes exposed and perhaps generated in the cultural landscape of a country whose composite and diverse character is often thought of as a distinctive feature.

Interestingly, attention has shifted towards discussions of the variety of 'Britishnesses' represented, leaving the often inescapable concern about drawing British films' typical profile as the bottom priority. In the conclusions of *British National Cinema* (1997), Sarah Street notes how 'Although there have been

discernible trends, it would appear that there is no such thing as a typical British film. The range of representations has been diverse, particularly as far as Britishness is concerned…' and continues:

> …in the 1980s, the cinematic backdrop to Thatcherism was punctuated by films which dealt with extremely different versions of Britishness… Not all British films are […] overtly concerned with questions of national identity, the expression of which will be evident according to readings which choose to privilege Britishness.
>
> (Street 1997, p. 198)

The 1990s saw several films consolidating and differentiating the 1980s trend that Street identifies, not only showing radically different aspects of Britishness, but also carefully selecting different locations for their stories – and perhaps not overtly challenging the socio-political context where Thatcherism was finally exiting the political stage and New Labour was promising a new era, but definitely weaving quite complex identities below these films' surface preoccupation with local identities.

The foregrounding of distinctive filming locations through visuals and accents often generates discourse where local identities feature prominently. Aural symbols of a national culture such as Britpop in *Trainspotting*, or those of a local culture such as the brass band in *The Full Monty* and the male voice choir in *Twin Town* are often interpreted through their primary surface meaning as representatives of British, English working-class, and Welsh traditional culture correspondingly. But their secondary meaning often remains unaccounted for and the aural symbols of another culture without any immediate local relevance such as the Iggy Pop and Lou Reed songs in *Trainspotting*, songs by black artists in *The Full Monty*, and the past hits in *Twin Town* are ignored despite their potential to 'play' secondary meaning in the film. The shift towards a wider range of representations opens new stimulating possibilities for a wider exploration of ideas of Britishness on offer in 1990s films. However, instances where their soundtracks are allowed to participate in the examination of these films' ideas of Britain as much as they participate in audiences' experiences are still few and far between. In this chapter I will seek to show ways to explore songs' narrative functions in British films and uncover their fundamental roles in opening paths for different identifications in these cinematic texts.

Trainspotting, *The Full Monty*, and *Twin Town* continued the cinematic renaissance spearheaded by *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994) and Danny Boyle's debut feature *Shallow Grave* (1995). These films' ability to succeed 'by drawing on their environment or the attributes of British culture' (Conrich, quoted in Murphy 2000, p. 2) as opposed to their 'Brit-pack' predecessors' attempt to emulate American shoestring budget and big budget films contributed to their success (Murphy 2000, pp. 1-2). *Trainspotting* and *The Full Monty* account for a large slice of British films' success – both domestic and foreign – in the 1990s and all three films' locations fit *Screenonline*'s category 'distinctively regional',[22] which defines a few 1980s and several 1990s comedies that foreground the place where their stories are set through different aspects. Their foregrounding of place has predictably attracted extensive press and scholarly attention and, while several authors address these films' place specificity in their writing, those narrative aspects telling a different story and opening paths for identifications leading somewhere other than the place where the films are set are often disregarded.

Julia Hallam notices how the origins of these films' identities are often found in the production stage: 'Arguably, it is also finding a cultural focus through media production schemes that enable film and media producers to emphasise the specificity of place, projecting national and regional identities which question and contest stereotypical constructions of 'Britishness'' (2000, p. 263). These films do offer different representations of Britishness and, I would add, deconstruct ideas about a unified Britishness, but there are further stereotypes one can encounter after the ideological 'union jack' is lowered. These identities are often complex and do not exactly correspond to a straight, unadultered version of those locations, nations and regions where the films are set and whose identities are supposedly presented. Their stereotypical constructions are contested, too. *Trainspotting*, for example, finds a cultural focus through its projection of Scottish identity just to dismiss it by means of Renton's verbal rejection. However, the association between all the non-British dramatic songs present on the soundtrack and our protagonist, works towards the (de)construction of Renton's cultural identity in more complex ways. These songs construct a space for Renton and the other junkies while the Britpop and electronic dance music represent the respectable Britishness for those outside the heroin-tinged,

[22] <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/594296/index.html> [Accessed 20 October 2009].

non-consumerist, nation-hating dimension Renton and friends inhabit. *The Full Monty* creates a connection between its unemployed white working-class males and the songs its characters use (predominantly performed by black artists or artists whose style recalls a traditionally black genre). These songs culturally place Gaz and the other DIY strippers somewhere other than just in the deindustrialised north of England, and awake a whole intricate set of associations that I shall explore through the following pages. *Twin Town* shows three sides of a cinematic world where traditional Welsh culture is audiovisually present alongside a strange combination of '90s British popular culture and a pick 'n' mix of past hits by English pop singers accompanied by the odd visual signifier of another era – perhaps happier and certainly wealthier times. By means of these audiovisual symbols of parallel cultural universes different nuances are articulated, different positions offered, and the assumed Welshness of *Twin Town* shattered, while the Lewis twins joyride their way through all these dimensions, negotiating their positions vis-à-vis a Welsh culture represented as alien to their lifestyle and a Swansea whose population – and their soundtrack – seems stuck in a time capsule.

While all three films are categorised as 'distinctively regional', neither the Screenonline website,[23] where these and several other films featuring regional locations are defined through their setting, nor other writing addressing identities in *Trainspotting*, *The Full Monty*, and *Twin Town* discuss how the prominent compilation soundtracks all three films share offer materials for the negotiation of their supposedly 'distinctively regional' character. Among the reasons I chose these three films, their local setting was not exactly a primary criterion. The way songs pervade these films, both in the world the characters inhabit (source) and outside their narrative dimension (dramatic), represented a primary requisite. Furthermore, the overlapping between their copious use of songs and the way all three offer materials for different identifications in a local setting constitutes a captivating element these films share, one that I think allowed for a fascinating journey through the different perspective their stories offer on their setting. Among the reasons I found these films specially appealing a major element was the way their soundtracks widen the possibilities for identifications besides their obvious place, voicing the different nuances surrounding the local identities often assumed to be present in

[23] <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/594296/index.html> [Accessed 20 October 2009].

'distinctively regional' films. These songs carry the potential to widen audiences' concept of which culture is being articulated. The following sections will deal with each of the three films separately and the final section will draw general conclusions.

Trainspotting
Lust for Life

The first film I am going to address in this chapter hardly requires an introduction. *Trainspotting*'s massive success crossed British borders, scoring big both in the USA and the old continent, and catapulted Danny Boyle's relatively niche film into escalating international mainstream success, leading to a lot of press and scholarly attention through the following years. Based on Irvine Welsh's eponymous novel ([1993] 1996), the film takes us on a journey through the urban wasteland of Edinburgh where protagonist Mark Renton (Ewan McGregor) and his friends drift in and out of heroin addiction, fluctuating between the odd half-hearted attempt to ditch their dangerous habit and a few close glances at the face of death, resurfacing every now and again for a quick incursion through the respectable world. Renton shows us around this heterogeneous cinematic dimension mercilessly, without sparing any unsettling details, like an improbable landlord showing off a rat den under the floorboards of a house he is letting. And yet, *Trainspotting* can attract different audiences to a world where unrepentant junkies and eccentric pushers are seemingly all one can identify with. The music, as I shall discuss, contributes to opening paths for identifications besides the 'good vs. evil' dichotomy available at surface level, and articulates a quite intricate web of audiovisual connections that are vital for its narrative progression.

Scholarly writing about *Trainspotting* abounds, from Murray Smith's comprehensive monograph (2002) to book chapters by Claire Monk (2000), Julia Hallam (2000), Karen Lury (2000), Miguel Mera (2005), and a section of a chapter on songs as leitmotif (Rodman 2006, 130-5) focused on popular music at large – which I shall discuss in depth later. However diverse, all these contributions share an attempt to outline the cultural dimension surrounding Renton and his mates, but the

music does not feature extensively in their discussions. Using these ideas as a point of departure, I shall explore the way popular music articulates the culture Renton and his friends inhabit.

Claire Monk's acute observation about how Renton's group is represented is a perfect springboard for considering how the soundtrack can signify place in a loose sense. In her chapter about 1990s underclass films she notes how 'The young male underclass of *Trainspotting* and *Twin Town* is emphatically not framed as a 'social problem' requiring a 'solution' but, with a certain knowing detachment, as a subculture.' (Monk 2000, p. 278). The framing she describes, however, is more than just visual. In *Trainspotting* music functions as a signifier for the 'subcultural' world that Renton and the other junkies inhabit beneath the surface.

As I mention above, music articulates their world, and positions Renton in and out of the exclusive 'junkiedom' first introduced through Iggy Pop's 'Lust for Life'. Smith notes how:

> Iggy's presence and biography is a singularly appropriate one which pervades the narrative in more than the obvious ways (he crops up in the narrative and another of his songs, 'Nightclubbing', appears on the soundtrack). For Iggy is a junkie but also a survivor, the song 'Lust for Life' deriving from a period in the late 1970s when he emerged from a long drug-induced silence to produce two energetic albums. His wasted yet enormously durable frame, subjected to all manner of abuse and exertion—glimpsed in the background in a poster on Tommy's wall—matches perfectly the taut, pale skin of the Edinburgh smackheads. … Iggy and 'Lust for Life' encapsulate the characters' and the movie's ambivalent attitude towards heroin—deliverer of both life-wrecking evil *and* delirious pleasure.
>
> (Smith 2002, p. 18)

While the resemblance between Iggy and *Trainspotting*'s junkies is obvious, I shall illustrate how a tight connection between him and the heroin-tinged dimension Renton and friends visit regularly emerges through every narrative manifestation of his persona. The lengthy opening sequence establishes the relationship between Iggy Pop and the 'junkulture' towards which all the male protagonists introduced through the opening finally gravitate. 'Lust for Life' – a title that ironically relates to Renton's 'Choose Life' manifesto presented shortly after – pierces the relatively still frame together with Renton's legs as he runs away from security guards after being caught stealing in a chain store. While Renton and Spud (Ewen Bremner) disrupt the

relatively still high street landscape, the dramatic music invades the soundtrack, previously occupied by source sounds of traffic and steps approaching. The difference between the two young thieves and the crowd becomes unambiguously established through the visuals, and the relationship between Pop and their world becomes clearer and clearer. After leaving the scene of a group shoplifting venture and being hit by a car, Renton appears unscathed. The point of view shifts to inside the car, from where we watch him get up, stare through the windshield, and laugh – a scene that seems to represent his clash against the 'respectable' world and his invulnerability.

The chase described above returns later, about halfway through the story, in a different cut showing Renton's capture while his voiceover reveals the dark side of their drugged-up lives to Blur's 'Sing' – a grave, intense song. The montage depicts the same runaway shoplifters no longer as untouchables, but instead unveils their frailty and final failure, which was previously omitted. Renton, Sick Boy (Jonny Lee Miller), and Spud are presented as a bunch of miserable outsiders who chose heroin despite their awareness of what awaited them. Finally, the driver's petrified stare – which functions quite similarly to a kind of internal audience response – follows Renton's spiteful laughter as a guard catches him shortly after the off-screen voiceover Renton has uttered the words 'Sooner or later this kind of thing was bound to happen'. The cut to a close-up of Renton's and Spud's shoes follows right after, as they enter the courtroom where Spud will be sentenced to six months' imprisonment and Renton unexpectedly saved by a rehab programme – a verdict that could be guessed by reading Spud's undone shoelaces as a sign of his forthcoming stumble over the law.

The escape presented at the beginning invites us to enter their world, but despite sharing several shots, the two occurrences are radically different. Besides the initial exclusion of their capture, the later occurrence depicts the world of heroin with uncanny detachment. The song remains in the background throughout the escape sequence, and flows quietly yet looming under Renton's desperate voiceover, a merciless account of a directionless existence dragged along by their addiction, which was earlier praised as pleasurable to Iggy Pop's rather different 'Lust for Life'. While the intro keeps returning to the same four chord pattern endlessly, the three friends are shown reflected in the mirrors surrounding the sign of the shop they

are about to rob, which could stand for their disenchanted behaviour, for their being trapped, perhaps for their falseness. The music's failure to develop in another direction seems to represent their inability to abandon their vicious lifestyle, which leads to a senseless reiteration of these illicit activities despite general awareness of their forthcoming effects. The lines 'I can't feel/cos I'm numb' are unemotionally whispered while Renton crashes against the car. 'Sing' accompanies the whole trial scene, too, and fades out after Renton's parents and friends are shown at a pub celebrating the judge's encouraging verdict. These two chase sequences are presented in a radically different way and the opposed musical choices represent two contradictory positions with respect to heroin – inside ('Lust for Life') and outside ('Sing') – which, I would argue, are largely developed through the songs.

Musical groupings are quite often discussed in scholarship about *Trainspotting*. Rodman, for example, gives three potential interpretations of a musical dichotomy he notes in the film and the possibilities for identifications its two terms offer:

> The musical dichotomy established between the Britpop groups and the Pop/Eno/Reed music reflects several oppositions of the film. First, there is the Scotland versus England opposition, where the Britpop music may be seen to represent England, whereas the Pop/Eno/Reed music represents Scotland (even though none of these artists are Scottish). A stronger interpretation may be seen in the opposition of 'drugged-out Scottish youths' versus 'UK bourgeoisie'. Perhaps the strongest reading is the opposition that may be termed 'Renton versus everyone else', and it is this opposition that I shall explore most closely. In fact, the Pop/Eno/Reed music *is* Renton's leitmotif, whereas the Britpop music is the leitmotif for the rest of the narrative world of the film.
>
> (Rodman 2006, p. 133)

The direction Rodman opens is fascinating. However, there are a few debatable aspects I would like to discuss further. Firstly, the generic label 'Britpop' seems inaccurate for a group of artists that would perhaps require a broader definition – for example, 'British contemporary popular music' (the one obvious exception being Bizet). While there are Britpop bands in *Trainspotting*'s soundtrack, these constitute less than half of the non-Pop/Eno/Reed songs – and, furthermore, are not all British. The Pop/Eno/Reed triad seems equally problematic. While there are clear links between Iggy Pop and Lou Reed, Brian Eno's inclusion seems odd, because there are

obvious differences between the Pop/Reed and the Eno music in *Trainspotting*, but especially because Eno lacks the 'sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll' credentials Pop and Reed share and, without a doubt, bring to the film – a feature that both Smith and Mera address in their writing.[24] Eno's only piece on the soundtrack, 'Deep Blue Day', is relegated to 'The Worst Toilet in Scotland' sequence featuring Renton's surreal dive in search of a couple of opium suppositories he just 'lost' down said toilet – a scene whose setting seems to place it somewhere between the reality portrayed in the narrative world and a strange hallucination, pulling Eno's piece along, outside *Trainspotting*'s fictional reality. Besides Pop's 'Lust for Life' and 'Nightclubbing', and Reed's 'Perfect Day', the other two artists are present in a few conversations and Iggy Pop lurks on a couple of posters whose appearance, alongside certain interesting sound editing choices, seems to point towards a precise aural symbolism – a feature I shall outline in the following pages.

In a similar fashion, Smith spots three musical groupings: 'the David Bowie/Lou Reed/Iggy Pop axis from the 1970s; the Britpop of Pulp, Blur, Elastica and Sleeper of the 1990s; and the 1990s techno-dance music of Bedrock and Ice MC.' (p. 66). For him 'Deep Blue Day' belongs among the 'songs by contemporaries and fellow travellers' but the connection linking Eno to Bowie, Reed, and Pop remains. While the groupings and the links among the artists Smith describes are carefully articulated, and his remarks about the contrasts between *Trainspotting*'s musical fragments are genuinely interesting, his musical categories do not serve a mapping of potential identifications in the film. Rodman focuses on the connection between his musical categories and the possibilities these offer for various identifications, and pursues the musical dichotomy in a thought-provoking way, but the nationalist reading seems at odds with Renton's resentful disinterest towards his Scottishness and odium against the English. His other options raise questions regarding class and character development, but sound vague, and especially do not fully explore the way sound editing, posters, and conversations about Pop and Reed construct the association between the two artists and the dimension where Renton and friends 'chose not to choose life'.

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[24] See, for example, Smith's remarks about the appropriateness of both Iggy Pop and 'fellow junkie survivor' Lou Reed for *Trainspotting*'s narrative (2002, p. 18), and Mera's description of Lou Reed's wild life and its influence on his songs (2005, p. 88-90).

If Iggy Pop's aural irruption through 'Lust for Life' may suggest a loose connection between his music and Renton, the way the music quickly fades out as Renton pronounces the wishful words 'I'm off the skag' clarifies the dimension Pop's first manifestation signifies. The lengthy opening sequence catapults the spectator on a journey through the pleasures of heroin and the world Renton and the other addicts inhabit. The 'Choose Life' manifesto becomes an ode to heroin right after the start of Iggy Pop's sinuous vocal performance, which accompanies a brief cross-editing of shots of Renton collapsing after being hit by a football on the pitch and while smoking crack at the Mother Superior's (the ramshackle 'coffee shop' style den where Swanney, a.k.a. the Mother Superior (Peter Mullan), sells drugs and gives his customers a place to enjoy group consumption). After his comprehensive elaboration on the 'Choose Life' concept, Renton first appears overwhelmed by drugs as the opening lines of 'Lust for Life' are heard, while his voiceover alter ego wonders 'But why would I want to do a thing like that?' and continues 'I chose not to choose life. I chose somethin' else. And the reasons? There are no reasons. Who needs reasons when you've got heroin?'.

The intro creates the build-up for the first appearance of heroin and the following few seconds lay out the initial round of connections linking Pop's presence, heroin, pleasure, and football. Later on, about halfway through the story, football will be once again connected with pleasure in the final shots of the montage showing Renton and his one-night-stand Diane (Kelly Macdonald), Tommy (Kevin McKidd) and girlfriend Lizzy (Pauline Lynch), and Spud and girlfriend Gail (Shirley Henderson) getting ready for sex (or at least attempting to) after a night out. Tommy and Lizzy realise their sex videotape, which Renton earlier 'borrows' disguised inside the case of a *100 Great Goals*, has disappeared. Renton's unfortunate post-coital comment ('I haven't felt that good since Archie Gemmill scored against Holland in 1978') follows a brief cross-editing of footage from the *100 Great Goals* video Tommy and Lizzy played believing it was a video of them having sex, and shots of Diane and Renton climaxing. The clichéd goal-orgasm analogy is clearly represented, both through the visuals and the dialogues. Heroin, on the other hand, is rather obscurely hinted at. While Tommy and Lizzy are frantically getting undressed on the sofa, a panning shot reveals a black and white Iggy Pop poster featuring the cover picture for his 1986 solo album *Blah Blah Blah* where he is standing cross-

armed, wearing a strange frown, as if he were staring at everything going inexorably wrong while Lizzy tells Tommy she wants to put the tape on.

Pop's other appearances are carefully disguised in the background at every key stage of Tommy's descent into heroin. Earlier at Tommy's, while he tells Renton the truth about Begbie's (Robert Carlyle) version of the pool game story, Renton swaps *100 Great Goals* for *Tommy+Lizzy Vol. 1*, which he later borrows. Tommy, unaware of Renton's fateful deeds, is lifting weights on the bench, and the first Iggy Pop poster featuring the cover image for The Stooges' 1973 album *Raw Power* appears and disappears right between Tommy's arms as he lifts and drops the weights. In medium shots, Tommy and the poster are decentred, one below the other. Finally, Tommy is shown sitting on the bench, and again, Pop's image looms exactly behind his shoulders. Later, Tommy is sitting in a club talking to Spud about how Lizzy asked him to decide between her and Iggy Pop after she found out he had tickets for his concert on her birthday – which Tommy had forgotten.

After the tape incident, Tommy decides to take Renton, Sick Boy, and Spud on a daytrip to the mountains, where Tommy's Scot pride and eagerness for 'the great outdoors' enrages Renton, provoking his notorious rejection of Scottish identity. Their 'healthy, informed, democratic decision to get back on heroin as soon as possible' follows and takes us back into the heroin lifestyle Spud, Sick Boy, and Renton share, which, as a lengthy montage accompanied by Iggy Pop's 'Nightclubbing' illustrates, is a full-time business. Again, an Iggy Pop song signals a return to their world, where Tommy is about to enter. Pop's slurred vocal performance commences on a close-up of Tommy as he tells Renton: 'Lizzy's gone, Mark. She's gone and fucking dumped me. It was that videotape. And that Iggy Pop business and other shite.' The connection between Iggy Pop's audiovisual appearances and the world surrounding heroin becomes crystal clear as Tommy identifies him among the reasons for the end of their relationship – which leads him towards his first hit – while Pop's voice appears in the background and stays there throughout Tommy's heroin induction. Again, the music fades out after playing for over four minutes (a quite unusual duration for songs in a feature film) as soon as Renton's voiceover announces 'But the good times couldn't last forever', shaking his mates out of their comfortably anaesthetised state while Alison's (Susan Vidler) screams replace the music. Alison, the only woman in the gang, finds her baby-girl

dead in her cradle. Baby Dawn's death smashes the bell jar under which the heroin-fuelled world Renton and the other junkies retreat to existed up to this rupture point. Their world shall not resurface again, and Iggy Pop's voice shall not be heard anymore. His – and Tommy's – final appearance happens later where the *Raw Power* cover image poster initially seen in Tommy's flat on the day the ill-fated tape swap was performed is shown again where Renton meets Tommy for the last time.

The *Raw Power* poster, visibly worn and clearly showing a ripped corner, hangs on the wall of Tommy's dilapidated den where Renton decides to visit Tommy after their respective HIV tests, as if to signify their world's impending decadence. Tommy has got AIDS and later his death happens off-screen but under Iggy Pop's paper gaze, whereas Renton is clean, and the ensuing conversation between him and Diane defines heroin and 'Ziggy' Pop as passé, stressing the necessity for something new.[25] Renton follows Diane's suggestions and Iggy Pop shall not resurface again. Correspondingly, the heroin-flavoured world Renton escaped alive shall not rematerialise until the end of the film, and his next taste will be to test the batch for the drug deal, only followed by a final hit on the road to London where the drug deal is later finalised. As I have tried to illustrate, every appearance by Iggy Pop – from vocal performance to printed image – stands for the heroin-filled dimension where Renton lives and which gradually entices and kills Tommy.

However, the last song playing on the heroin wasteland Renton frequents is Lou Reed's 'Perfect Day', which, as Miguel Mera brilliantly exemplifies, 'with its contradictory musical message, closely reflects *Trainspotting*'s moral standpoint.' (2005, p. 93). Mera discusses the ambiguity 'Perfect Day' instils in the narrative through Lou Reed's controversial persona, his vocal performance, the piece's lyrical content, its unusual harmonic structure, and the strategic weaving of these elements with the visuals. The first mention comes about in a conversation about Sick Boy's 'theory' where he lists Lou Reed among those who 'had it and lost it', while Renton defends him. Their diverging views about Lou Reed's inspiration, I think, reflect

[25] Diane: You're not getting any younger, Mark. The world's changing, music's changing, even drugs are changing. You can't stay in here all day dreaming about heroin and Ziggy Pop.
Renton: It's Iggy Pop.
Diane: Whatever. I mean, the guy's dead, anyway.
Renton: Iggy Pop's not dead. He toured last year. Tommy went to see him.
Diane: The point is you've got to find something new.

different attitudes towards their lives as addicts and could be interpreted as early signs of Sick Boy's continued revolving around heroin – unlike Reed – as opposed to Renton's final resolution to 'choose life' – like Reed, that is if we equate choosing life with giving up heroin. Mera argues that Renton's stance 'immediately invited the audience to form a link between the two men' (p. 87), which, I think, is further fortified by awareness of Reed's heroin addiction and finally settled after Renton decides to clean up, joining the heroin survivors whose audiovisual appearances punctuate his story. But besides the obvious resemblance between Renton's character and Lou Reed's persona, the way 'Perfect Day' and the visuals are intertwined alone creates a close connection between Lou Reed and his piece, and Renton.

Smith notes how 'the song is used in its entirety, and dominates the sound mix throughout, unchallenged by Renton's voice-over' (p. 67), but its beginning and end are not mentioned. The editing, I would argue, invites another potential reading. The song enters as Renton overdoses, accompanies him on a journey to the brink of death and back, and finally exits as he is taken to his childhood bedroom, locked away from heroin. Lou Reed seems to be there not purely to mean 'heroin' alongside Iggy Pop. 'Perfect Day' unveils the dark side of the dimension whose pleasures are earlier represented through the 'Lust for Life' and 'Nightclubbing' sequences, letting the quiet tragedy of Renton's addiction surface and reach its low point where the piece's bleak irony rises through the chorus's crescendo while Renton lies first on the road near Swanney's and later on the pavement outside A&E, unconscious, close to death. It is as if Lou Reed accompanied Renton there and dragged him out, a godlike manifestation materialising through his voice, first a low melancholic whisper, later a quietly desperate cry, which stays for the entire duration of what becomes an intense, intimate cinematic encounter between the fictional Mark Renton and the real Lou Reed.

The 'Perfect Day' overdose sequence follows the 'Sing' escape sequence, which works like a restart for *Trainspotting*'s narrative, and marks the watershed between the heroin 'pleasureland' of the first half and the nadir of Renton's addiction, after which the junkies' world fades out – as do Iggy Pop and Lou Reed. Despite the different perspective their songs offer, all three are heard on a look at heroin from within. The way the songs begin and end affirms their connotation and, alongside the Iggy Pop posters and the conversations about him and Lou Reed,

articulates a world where audiences can perform different identifications. For example, Smith identifies the world *Trainspotting* depicts along the lines Monk (2000) chose, but dares proposing a political reading:

> Although the milieu depicted by *Trainspotting* is working-class, however, it is not a working one – it is, rather, a world dominated by leisure. […] The real locus of the film is thus not traditional working-class culture – which rather forms the distant horizon to the action – but the drug underworld inhabited by Renton and his cohorts. The gang occupy a social space in which the underclass (the long-term or permanently unemployed, marooned by the collapse of traditional industry and the flight of capital) meets the counterculture (the tradition of conscious dissent from the values and lifestyle represented by modern consumer capitalism). As we know from the opening voice-over, the contempt of the counterculture for the ethos and rewards of mainstream society is present here; but it coexists with a deep pessimism about the prospects for anything better. In *La Haine* (Mathieu Kassovitz, 1995), another film from the mid-1990s which takes as its focus disaffected, unemployed youth stranded on a housing estate, there is at least the prospect of collective social rebellion: the film opens with footage of a riot, accompanied by The Wailers' protest song, 'Burnin' and Lootin''. By contrast, far from railing against the conditions of their post-industrial environment, the characters in *Trainspotting* have adapted to it. Indeed in certain respects the group mirrors, rather than opposes, the strident individualism of Thatcherite neo-conservatism.
>
> (Smith 2002, pp. 28-9)

Smith's reading implies the group's distance from class consciousness, a value which I believe could reflect Thatcherite ideas or be interpreted as a consequence of those ideas on society at large. However one interprets their individualism – a topic that would deserve further attention – songs can offer a different perspective on their world. While The Wailers' song is related to a way out for the characters of *La Haine*, the paths Iggy Pop's and Lou Reed's songs offer in *Trainspotting* are unexplored. The discourse surrounding *Trainspotting* often centres on the various identities offered in the film, but music does not enter their examination. Smith notes how Iggy Pop and Lou Reed fit the wider American culture theme pervading the story (pp. 18-21) and later addresses *Trainspotting*'s mockery of both Scottish nationalism and landscape, and English heritage imagery (p. 26), observing how the omnipresent Other of these tourist-orientated representations of Edinburgh, the great Scottish outdoors, and London keeps returning. The soundtrack defines the drug-fuelled facet of these constructed representations' Other, the dimension Renton and

friends inhabit, through songs and other musical references, opening a way out of having to hear Scottish or other British identities in *their* world. Iggy Pop and Lou Reed construct a different dimension, where drugs, their allegedly non-consumerist culture, and rejecting national identity replace 'life', consumerist culture, and Scottish pride, and where audiences can hear their alternative to the values Renton and the others reject. If their songs signify heroin on the surface, their world and its songs can offer a place to identify away from whatever that mainstream 'life' they reject is to us. National identity is a clear possibility – and quite a fascinating one given how discourse about the movie often highlighted the project's Scottish origins. Interestingly, despite *Trainspotting* being acclaimed as a Scottish film, its soundtrack does not offer Scottishness. Instead, I argue, its narrative opens several paths for audiences to identify away from national identity – be it Scottish, English, or British – via the space where Renton and his cohorts found their sedated happiness.

There are, however, those songs Rodman defines as 'the leitmotif for the rest of the narrative world of the film' (2006, p.133). These, as Smith notes, include Britpop and electronic dance music, two prominent musical phenomena in Britain in the 1990s, which, I argue, can offer further materials for identifications where audiences' interpretations of a genre's place on the national identity map can produce different effects. Kevin Donnelly notes how 'Trainspotting attempted to ride the wave of "Britpop" of the mid-1990s. Director Danny Boyle pointed out that the film connected with the Britpop explosion, featuring Blur (and their singer Damon Albarn alone), Pulp and Sleeper.' (2007, p. 92). While Donnelly briefly describes all the sequences featuring songs, neither Britpop nor the other songs are discussed in terms of which culture these 'play' into *Trainspotting*'s narrative. The Britpop songs featuring in the movie[26] are not big hit singles and a few were unavailable to audiences until its release but, despite these songs' low profile, the label '*Trainspotting*'s Britpop soundtrack' did highlight the songs' genre association and therefore their potential functions deserve further attention. Donnelly calls Britpop a 'movement' (p. 92) and earlier I use 'genre', which, as David Hesmondhalgh (2001)

[26] The two soundtrack albums, as Donnelly notes later (2007, pp. 96-7), feature a wider array of songs, including a few interesting notes about 'a 'wish list' of tracks [Director Danny Boyle and Producer Andrew MacDonald] intended to include' (liner notes for *Trainspotting #2*, 1997), which are in the soundtrack album *Trainspotting #2*, but not in the film.

makes clear, is quite problematic. In the chapter 'British Popular Music and National Identity', he argues that:

> Britpop was never, in any sense, a *movement* with common artistic aims. Nor can Britpop be thought of as a musical *genre* […] Britpop is best understood, instead, as a *discourse* […] And what Britpop discourse did was to construct a tradition of quintessentially British and/or English music that distorted and simplified British musical culture.'
>
> (Hesmondhalgh 2001, p. 276).

The essentialised white Englishness which, as Hesmondhalgh's account shows, was prevalent in the Britpop discourse (p. 278), makes Britpop songs a fascinating element of a narrative where Scottishness and Englishness are equally derided and a Thatcherite subtext lurks beneath the story's alternative surface. Earlier, Hesmondhalgh notes how in the 1990s:

> [m]usicians, listeners, and writers emphasized a continuity in British popular music from the late 1960s to the 1990s, a lineage of rock creativity which to them suggested 'alternative' forms of British identity, less conformist and complacent than those embodied in older, traditional forms, or in Thatcherism.
>
> (Hesmondhalgh 2001, p. 275)

While for several perceivers Britpop songs can evoke these ideas, which a few Britpop bands did represent through their satirical stances vis-à-vis traditional ideas about Britain, the other, quite different ideas surrounding Britpop in the mid-1990s could nonetheless enter the movie's textual field. Later Hesmondhalgh defines his main interest in the chapter as 'the politics of Britpop discourse's implicit anxiety and conservatism about British national identity, and also the ironic fact that such discourse was initially produced amongst purportedly 'alternative' popular cultural institutions.' (pp. 276-7). Moves to appropriate Britpop discourse's 'latent conservatism' as the pride of rightwing xenophobe politicians in 1996 and a new alternative British image by New Labour in 1997 testify Britpop's ambiguity as a signifier of culture.

While the obscure Britpop songs featuring in *Trainspotting* could deter neo-conservative interpretations, the rest of the narrative world of the film that Rodman relates to Britpop chooses life. Where Renton and his friends are, however

temporarily, ‘choosing life’, Britpop or electronic dance music are heard, which can reinforce the tie between these two musical groupings and the Thatcherite ethos ‘the group mirrors rather than opposes’ as Smith notes (2002, p. 29). Through its soundtrack, the movie can suggest how the group mirrors these ideas towards the end where, as Rodman notes, ‘a final bit of irony for Renton appears with the song ‘Closet Romantic’ by Damon Albarn, the lead singer of Blur. Renton is depicted as moving on at the end of the film, presumably shaking off the drug culture to join society and its less lethal addictions.’ (2006, p. 134). Quoting Bert Cardullo (1997), Rodman continues:

> ‘Metaphorically, he is gliding into bourgeois-induced, rather than drug-initiated, oblivion. He says he has chosen life, but the ironic comments […] indicate that what he has really done is to choose one poison over another, the slow-acting rather than the fast…’ (Cardullo 1997, p. 162). The transfer of musical style from Iggy Pop to Britpop’s Albarn at the end signifies Renton’s emergence into the realm of the English bourgeois.
>
> (Rodman 2006, p. 134)

The end clearly shows his choices, but these songs are present earlier, where Renton gradually weans himself off heroin and tries ‘life’ instead. Perhaps the group, as both Rodman and Cardullo (1997) suggest, can never totally exist outside the ‘choose life’ manifesto Renton recites and rejects, and later reconsiders. And perhaps the parallels a certain Britpop discourse can offer between ‘choosing life’, Thatcherite ethos, and Englishness disguised under a union jack – and therefore available for every subject in the kingdom – suggest these three ‘choices’ are often inescapable.

Renton finally ‘chooses life’ despite his conscious rejection and engages consumerist culture through illegal substance abuse – which can never quite exist outside legal consumerist culture, but instead parasitically lives off its goods through pillaging and reselling. By effectively embracing a consumerist, dog-eat-dog lifestyle through the whole story, Renton blurs the divisions between ‘life’, consumerist culture, and embracing national identity on the one hand, and heroin, rejecting a consumerist lifestyle, and rejecting national identity on the other. As the choices seemingly available between these opposed terms are removed, the ideas on the opposed sides are emptied, the dominant side remains dominant, and total rejection perhaps never was among the options. Like choosing heroin over ‘life’ and consuming drugs and not goods correspondingly led towards ‘life’ and being a

participant in the consumerist culture initially scorned, rejecting Scottishness and despising Englishness can reroute Renton towards Britishness, reabsorbing his stray character under the dominant identity. The music seals the event and the piece's lyrical content – a James Bond filmography which Albarn quietly recites in a low-pitched voice – reminds us about another cause of Scottish pride where Scottishness was assimilated and effaced, leaving the 007 films venerated by Sick Boy perceived as a British or – worse – English product. The music, as I have tried to illustrate, enables a reading against *Trainspotting*'s alleged Scottishness, but undercuts the possibility for a total rejection of a dominant culture, be it lifestyle-based or place-bound. On the one hand, a few songs offer paths for identifications leading outside the predictable surface level where 'life' or heroin, to consume or not to consume, and Scottish or uninterested in being Scottish are all the options the film makes available. On the other hand, other songs erase the differences between these two sides, foreclosing choices and leading towards the gradual disappearance of a radical alternative to 'life', consumerist culture, being proud of a national identity, and whichever other meaning one hears in the Britpop and electronic dance music that replaces Iggy Pop and Lou Reed.

Considering where and how different songs are woven into *Trainspotting*'s narrative unlocks a whole new set of underground connections linking audible and visible signifiers not only to their obvious surface primary readings, but also to further secondary readings. While the former usually accompany the songs and the artists from their pre-cinematic existence outside the film narrative, the latter can originate around the songs' and the artists' pre-cinematic baggage – and therefore are available prior to their inclusion in the film – or depend on their audiovisual placement in the narrative economy of the film – and therefore are unavailable outside their cinematic context. So considering Lou Reed's 'Perfect Day' in *Trainspotting* would involve looking at musical materials as well as letting any information regarding his persona (the obvious example being his own heroin addiction) and any meaning his songs and his persona may collect all through the narrative's development enter the discourse surrounding audiences' cinematic journey. However, while the results can include the obvious consideration of biographical parallels between the fictional Renton and the real Iggy Pop or Lou Reed, broader reflections can ensue from the inclusion of music in discussions of

films. As I hope to have illustrated with this analysis of *Trainspotting*, considering soundtracks can offer further insight into which identifications are available and how the paths songs build develop when we watch and listen to films.

The Full Monty

Where you from, you sexy thing?

The Full Monty (1997) was the biggest international hit movie made in Britain in the 1990s. After *Trainspotting* charmed audiences at home and worldwide, Peter Cattaneo's first feature, albeit rather different, became another great success story outside the genre triad where British cinema had enjoyed lasting international success (the costume drama tradition, social realism, and the brand new British romcom). The characters' renegotiation of their disrupted working and private lives gives identity formation a significant place in *The Full Monty*'s narrative.

Gaz (Robert Carlyle) and Dave (Mark Addy) have been made redundant after the closure of the steel factory where they used to work and, after finding out that local women are queuing outside the working men's club to attend a women-only Chippendale-style night, Gaz decides he wants to get organised and recruit other jobless men for their own strippers' night. One day, while the two are out jogging in the outskirts of Sheffield, Dave rescues Lomper (Steve Huison), whom they find breathing his car's exhaust fumes in the obvious attempt to kill himself. Lomper works as a security guard for the abandoned steel factory where one night the three men and Nathan (William Snape), Gaz's son, spend a few hours hanging out and playing Lomper's records through the PA. After Gaz's first awkward and quite unfortunate strip-tease attempt to Hot Chocolate's 'You Sexy Thing', the factory becomes their rehearsal space. There the three friends and Gerald (Tom Wilkinson) – another Job Centre regular who, despite being a middle-class man with a middle-class wife who does not know about his joblessness, joins the strippers group – arrange auditions to recruit other members. Horse (Paul Barber), a black man who knows a few dance moves, and Guy (Hugo Speer), a young well-endowed plumber who cannot dance, enter the group. Dave drops out and later rejoins the group, but meanwhile the remaining lot get caught by a guard towards the end of a dress

rehearsal, but, despite all the ups and downs, the six DIY strippers reclaim the stage of the working men's club where they go for the Full Monty (i.e. strip all the way) – that is for the internal audience, but not for the cinematic one.

The current literature about *The Full Monty* largely focuses on class, national identity, and masculinity, and opens several interesting questions about the characters' identities. John Hill (2000) shows how different representations of the working class in *The Full Monty* and other 1990s British working-class films stand for a certain longing for the 'national wholeness' that other authors had previously attributed to the British working class, exploring the gender implications of these ideas of national community. Through his examination of *The Full Monty*, he illustrates how the decline of the working class and of traditional masculinity develop simultaneously and, while the six men reverse their decline through roles traditionally attributed to females (preparing for being strippers for a day faces them with anxiety about their looks), their dignity is not fully threatened, and these males recover their endangered roles through re-bonding rather than revisiting their masculinities. Women, as Hill observes, are still playing secondary roles, but the working-class men portrayed are not all white heterosexuals, which contributes to a diversification in cinematic representations of the working class in British films of the 1990s. While the diversification Hill talks about is reflected through the soundtrack, there are several complications and, as I shall attempt to illustrate later, diversity does not quite get the Full Monty.

Claire Monk (2000) discusses a few 1990s underclass films – including *The Full Monty* – where the decline of the working class and men's anxieties regarding their roles are addressed through different strategies. All these stories offer restoration of their upset order, but their 'happy endings' are commodified and serve those ideologies of 'new' Britain that Blair's New Labour tried to promote in the late 1990s. Her reading redresses the obvious hopeful interpretations these films' endings suggest and casts light on the complex nuances implied by their stories.

Moya Luckett's chapter on image and nation (2000) largely focuses on the cinematic representations of Britishness in the 1990s. Her claim 'that a recognisable but diverse set of characteristics readily identify the 'Britishness' of the nation's film productions, albeit in the absence of a national consensus as to what 'Britain' itself might mean in the late 1990s' (p. 88) paves the way for a reading of these films

where national identity and regional identity are simultaneously present. However, she finally notes how, despite *The Full Monty*'s attempt to unite through its representations of differences, its multicultural image reveals its vacuity and becomes a commodity.

Julia Hallam (2000) also looks at a handful of mid-1990s British working-class films, focussing on the relationships between the films, and their local setting and production context. She discusses *Trainspotting*, *Twin Town*, and *The Full Monty*, among other films and, following reflections about *Twin Town*'s negotiation of Welsh national identity and *Trainspotting*'s 'similar preoccupation with the destruction of stereotypical representations of Scottish identity' (p. 268), she notes how these three films and *Brassed Off* share 'their re-articulation of working-class identity through its relation to national and regional stereotypes and geographical marginalisation' (p. 268).

I would drive the point regarding these films' negotiation of local identities and marginalisation in a different direction. There clearly is a strong geographical place being offered alongside the characters' class identities, be it region or nation, but the culture Renton, the Lewis twins, and Gaz live in exists alongside the respectable, working variant of their local community and constitutes a different class incarnation and a different geographical reality of those locations. The dimension these outsiders inhabit may represent the outskirts of their cityscapes and localities, culturally and physically, but these anti-heritage representations are constructed against their other on the ground they both occupy. Instead of destroying their local identities, I think, these films weave other cultural identities into stock stereotypical representations of Scottish, English, and Welsh identities. Furthermore, the process Hallam describes may not only be a one-way re-articulation of class identities through national, regional, or other place-bound identities, but also produce a shift for national, regional, and other place-bound identities through class and other non-place-bound cultural identities. I shall further elaborate the point I outline above in the final section of this chapter.

Hallam's closing remarks about the commodification working-class representations undergo in these mid-1990s working-class films could perhaps lead to conclusions similar to Luckett's criticism of *The Full Monty*'s happy-go-lucky multiculturalism, that is that these working-class representations celebrate their

protagonists' story of success through hard times, paint it gold, and regurgitate happy endings seemingly without complications – be it social, racial, or more broadly cultural. But music further complicates representations of these miscellaneous identities, weaving close connections between aspects of the characters' identities and specific cultural signifiers that songs offer through their pre-cinematic pasts. While these contributions discuss several interesting aspects of cultural identity in *The Full Monty* – and other 1990s British films – their authors do not explore the way the music articulates the six men's new place in a world where their roles as working males underwent substantial changes. I shall develop a musical perspective on these authors' ideas about *The Full Monty*, explain how songs narrate a significant chunk of the six men's stories and construct their world through wider connections to other cultural realities, and finally see how the music and other aspects of the narrative intersect.

Hallam's remarks point in an interesting direction. She notes how 'Contemporary British films reiterate this approach: working-class identity is depicted not as the collective political unity of a group in society but as a site for exploring the personal stagnation, alienation and social marginalisation of their (primarily) white male characters' (2000, p. 261). The social marginalisation of *The Full Monty*'s white males, I would add, is articulated through the several songs by black artists (often females) present on the soundtrack. While definitely present through the visuals and dialogues, the national and regional stereotypes and geographical marginalisation Hallam talks about are unmatched on the soundtrack, where the musical selection shows a quite exceptional balance between UK and US artists, and there are but two oblique local references – the association between 'You Can Leave Your Hat On' and Sheffield Joe Cocker, who performed the *9½ Weeks* version, and 'Deep Fried in Kelvin', an obscure early B-side by Sheffield band Pulp, faintly heard playing in the working men's club while the strippers are getting ready backstage, but hardly recognisable, since the parts heard are without vocals. But let's see how the remaining British music on the soundtrack relates to Gaz and his fellow strippers.

The first instance of source music encountered is the brass band marching outside the abandoned factory where Dave and Gaz – accompanied by his son Nathan – are attempting to steal a girder which Gaz hopes to persuade somebody to

buy. Lomper, the works band member and security guard whom they later befriend, notices an open door and locks it, thus locking them in Gaz's and Dave's former workplace. While this unfortunate event leads to a comic escape plan resulting in the sinking of the loot followed by an unplanned dip in a canal, there is a complex audiovisual symbolism available in this introduction.

This is the first time we see Dave and Gaz, pillaging the place where they used to work, now empty and quiet, until the brass band – the one vestige of life related to their factory that still appears to be 'working', as Dave cynically points out – marches outside and their way out is blocked. Susan J. Smith (1997) gives a comprehensive account of the British brass-band movement's resonance for working-class culture. She notes how brass bands, seen by some 'as one of the most remarkable working-class cultural achievements in European history' (p. 513), thrived throughout Britain but are more readily associated with the north and midlands of England. Smith discusses the place the sound of brass had since Victorian times, observing how 'On the one hand [it] infused and reorganized local spaces…' and 'On the other hand, by virtue of its place in the social landscape, [it] had the power to *redefine and invigorate local and national identity*' (pp. 513-4), and quoting Herbert's point that the sound of brass 'is capable of stimulating immediate thoughts of class, history and geography' (p. 514). Alongside the local accents, starkly opposed to a placeless, contrived upper-crust male TV voice heard enumerating the wonders of a new Sheffield to a rampant fanfare-infused 1960s soundtrack, the works band thus instantly invokes ideas about the working-class and the industrial north of England. However, given the context where the non-working working-class men are shown 'liberating' – as Gaz puts it – their empty cathedral of England's industrial north, the brass band becomes a surviving aural vestige of their cultural identity, which is shattered by being laid off work, but especially through the social exclusion their condition implies. The brass band is among the few survivors of their working-class male community that still surrounds the abandoned factory. Dave and Gaz getting locked in really seems to be a reverse representation of their getting locked out, excluded by their community, which is here embodied by the brass band and its sound. What I am arguing is that besides the brass band's power to '*redefine and invigorate local and national identity*' to quote Smith again, its sound invokes other fundamental aspects of Dave's and Gaz's 'place' beyond geography.

The opening locates the characters through their new position with relation to a clearly defined cultural, local, social, national, historic, and geographical dimension to which they no longer belong. All the ideas Smith relates to brass bands are invoked through the music and its narrative place. Even up to this point, where the soundtrack matches the geographical setting where the story takes place, the music conveys more than just a local or national identity. In the following pages I am going to focus on the songs without local connections and the culture these 'play' in the film world.

Gaz's masculine pride is wounded after discovering several local women queuing outside the working men's club to see Chippendale-style male strippers at a women-only night. He decides to sneak in through the male toilets' window with Nathan to go find Jean (Lesley Sharp), Dave's wife, and, as Gaz puts is, 'tell her what for'. After sending Nathan to inspect the venue without results and overhearing Jean talking about how Dave has given up on everything – including her – Gaz decides to venture where the strippers are doing their thing. Donna Summer's 'Hot Stuff' is first heard as Gaz wanders through the venue looking for Nathan and witnesses the scene, a few hundred women screaming for men getting undressed, and convinces himself – and a few other jobless men – that they too can do it.

'Hot Stuff' begins abruptly on the cut to Gaz's incursion through the venue and ends on the final cut of the working men's club sequence, as if swept away by it, after a long shot of Jean in the overexcited crowd of women, all screaming for the grand finale. 'Hot Stuff' is a rather intriguing choice for *The Full Monty*'s story, where six men are struggling against the decline of their masculinity alongside that of the steel industry that gave them work, and its fitting title – echoing in their stage name, Hot Metal, and recurring several times in the chorus – seems to evoke an intricate mix of issues related to their sexualities, their problematic positions vis-à-vis women's desires, and, in this context, the job some of them have lost. For the characters introduced up to this point relationships with women are difficult. Dave is having problems with Jean, whom we – and Gaz – see confiding her worries about her marriage to a couple of girlfriends in the men's toilets of the club. Gaz is not in a relationship, but his ex-wife has custody of their son, questions his lifestyle, and her hostility towards him jeopardises his chances of being allowed to spend time with Nathan after their dress rehearsal is interrupted by a guard, which results in a group

visit to the police headquarters. Donna Summer's song comes to represent several different aspects of Dave's and Gaz's lives, but above all its first appearance exposes their wounded masculinity, which fuels Gaz's eagerness to react to their condition, deliver the 'Hot Stuff' the chorus demands, and reconquer their pride as desirable and – however temporarily – working males. The lyrical content seems to voice those women's needs, igniting female bonding through recognition in their narrative of active, unashamed desire, and the way the music swiftly fades out marks the rough start of another day without a job for Gaz and his friends. The usual routine unfolds again: confronting his son's criticism, hanging out at the local Job Centre with other men pondering their hapless condition, risking losing custody of Nathan because he struggles to provide maintenance, until he decides to do it. One night, while hanging out with Nathan, Dave, and Lomper at the factory, Dave finds a Hot Chocolate album among Lomper's records and Gaz gives it a try. However rough, his first performance initiates his reappropriation of their abandoned workplace, through the music and his maladroit yet significant dance attempt.

Again, the lyrical content makes explicit reference to sexual appeal, which, alongside the place where the performance happens, gives 'You Sexy Thing' a twofold connotation. Gaz is shown occupying the space where they used to work aurally, through the Hot Chocolate album they choose, and corporeally, through his first steps towards the realisation of his dream. But besides reappropriating the empty steel factory as a rehearsal space, his first striptease attempt could stand for the beginning of a renegotiation of their roles as males. Another important event is the three friends' joint involvement in 'You Sexy Thing', since everybody contributes to the appropriation of Lomper's current, and Dave's and Gaz's former workplace through music. Lomper has brought his records, Dave and Gaz recognise and choose the Hot Chocolate album and, after singing and dancing to a line from the chorus, Dave plays 'You Sexy Thing' through the PA, and Gaz's performance follows, interrupted by a scratch on the record when Dave lifts the arm after the cigarette incident cuts Gaz off. The music is a fundamental element for the three men's initial bonding through the first steps towards the reappropriation of their dignity, which, despite the unpromising start, is finally fulfilled. Their rehearsal music filling job-related locations becomes a recurrent trope, and other similar sequences advance the narrative significantly.

‘Je t’aime… moi non plus’ by Serge Gainsbourg and Jane Birkin accompanies the first of three auditions. Gaz, Dave, Lomper, and their new acquisition, Gerald, interview a few candidates for Hot Metal, while Nathan helps, playing tapes on the ghetto blaster they have brought along. Again, the scene takes place in the empty factory. It seems unclear whether the music the candidates perform to is brought by themselves or by the selection committee, but, whoever chose those two songs, there are a few interesting matches worth talking about. ‘Je t’aime’’s intro is heard on a panning shot of Sheffield, two shots of the bare surroundings of the factory showing a ‘for sale’ placard and, on the first line, as the first candidate, a white older guy faintly shaking his ass, awkwardly undresses without passion, a performance that contrasts sharply with Birkin’s and Gainsbourg’s whispered vocal efforts, producing a comic yet vaguely sad scene. Obviously the white guy does not get the job, but the interesting coincidence is that the first rejection happens on the one non-English-language piece on the soundtrack, which happens to be the first among the songs heard in the factory performed by a white act.

The following candidate, a black man named ‘Horse’ (Paul Barber), is not too young but can definitely dance, and blows the committee members’ minds, showing off different steps to Wilson Pickett’s ‘Land Of A 1,000 Dances’. The association between the group’s steps towards renegotiating their masculine roles and the songs heard in job-related locations performed by non-white artists becomes clear. It is interesting to note that ‘You Sexy Thing’ and ‘Land Of A 1,000 Dances’ are the only songs performed by black male artists, and while Gaz does not exactly do justice to the title, Horse tailors his performance to the music and impresses everybody. Another interesting topic emerges while the selection committee is auditioning Horse. The stereotypical white men’s beliefs about black men being well-endowed are mentioned but immediately defused by Gerald, whose comment (‘but what’s the point of having a big wanger if you need a zimmer frame to tout it in’) clearly exorcises his assumed inferiority to the other potential older candidate besides him. Later, his assumptions about Horse’s alleged endowment are refuted after Horse is shown talking to someone on a pay phone about the failure of some kind of performance-enhancing contraption he plans on using on the night of their show.

Dave is later shown questioning Jean as to whether she has dated a black guy, whether she would, etc.

In his chapter about borrowing black masculinity in films, Krin Gabbard quotes Eric Lott's study of blackface minstrelsy in early-nineteenth-century America: 'Lott argues that whites in the early nineteenth century, especially working-class males, regarded black males as sexual role models; the minstrel shows regularly played to white obsessions with the supposed hypersexuality, spontaneity, and phallic power of black men. Lott points out that similar obsessions characterize "most American white men's equipment for living" just as much today as in the 1830s when minstrelsy was most popular' (2001, p. 311). These ideas, I think, still operate to a certain extent in *The Full Monty*, where the black man's assumed hypersexuality intimidates Gerald and Dave, and yet intrigues everybody, and despite being supported by a significant portion of the songs Hot Metal use for rehearsal, these narrative ploys contain the music's blackness, using its race connotations as a catalyser for the white men's reappropriation of their lives as working, desirable males. Another interesting point about blackness in *The Full Monty* is that Paul Bucknor, the black British filmmaker who developed the original idea for 'the all black version of the Chippendales' which attracted the attention of Twentieth Century Fox executive producer Uberto Pasolini, had limited involvement in the script writing process. (Bucknor quoted in Baker 1998, p. 14). Horse's character was added precisely because, despite not wanting creative control over the script, Bucknor was allowed involvement in the project.

Guy (Hugo Speer), the one who auditions after Horse, cannot dance, but his exceptional 'manhood' alone persuades everybody to recruit him. However, his homosexuality, later disclosed where Lomper and Guy run off after the dress rehearsal, defuses the perceived 'threat' for the heterosexuals. Their first kiss is implied but not shown. Earlier in the film, Gaz calls the Chippendale-style strippers 'poofs' and his verdict about their posters is 'I mean look at the state of that. I do not know what you got to smile about. He's got no willy, for starters', which exposes his desperate attempt to reclaim masculinity as a prerogative of heterosexual males, showing his nervous dismissal of gayness as unmanly. Furthermore, while Lomper and Guy come out to us, their homosexuality – let alone their relationship – remains unconfessed to their mates.

The musical event following Horse's and Guy's auditions unveils a recurrent usage of popular music's baggage in *The Full Monty*. *Flashdance*'s title track, again heard in the factory while, one night, the six men watch parts of the film looking for inspiration for their choreographies, establishes an obvious association between the jobless men of Steel City, UK, and the famous female steelworker of Steel City, USA, Pittsburgh, PA – which happens to be Sheffield's twin city. 'What A Feeling', again performed by a non-white singer (this time female), seems to confirm the consistent pattern whereby the jobless white men use songs somehow related to other marginalised groups, whose mediation through the centuries has often highlighted their sexuality.

In *The Full Monty* music invokes the working class (The British Steel Stockbridge Band's piece performed by the works band at the beginning), black Americans (Donna Summer, Wilson Pickett, Sister Sledge), black British (Hot Chocolate), women (Donna Summer, Irene Cara, who sings the *Flashdance* title track, Sister Sledge), and homosexuals (generally disco music, represented by Donna Summer, as well as glam rock, represented by Gary Glitter, who had not yet faced paedophilia-related charges). All the artists whose songs are heard – and often actively selected – by members of Hot Metal in job-related locations fit one and often two of the above-mentioned groupings. There are a few partial exceptions. I say partial because Joe Loss & His Orchestra, whose piece 'The Stripper' accompanies the second rehearsal, are a white British jazz band and the version of 'You Can Leave Your Hat On' scoring the grand finale is a cover by Tom Jones, white and Welsh, but who has known working-class origins and has reached international success cultivating his distinctive vocal style, often described through comparisons with rhythm 'n' blues and other genres with black origins. But there's something odd about 'You Can Leave Your Hat On'. It does not feature in their rehearsals, which can suggest another association Tom Jones' music carries. He is a white working-class British man who has successfully appropriated aural symbols of blackness through his music – and Hot Metal, who are predominantly white working-class British men, are doing a similar thing, appropriating stereotypically black virtues through dancing and stripping. Besides the connections between blackness and Tom Jones, 'You Can Leave Your Hat On' is a fitting cinematic cross-reference, since the Joe Cocker version was a great hit after its inclusion on the soundtrack for *9*

½ Weeks (1986), where it accompanied Kim Basinger's legendary strip scene. Furthermore, Hot Metal's final performance follows the title literally, as they do indeed leave their hats on until the camera shifts behind them. But the final striptease is not the only field where *The Full Monty* does not deliver.

Where the music constructs bridges between other marginalised groups, and the six protagonists, their actions often undermine these connections. Outside the working men's club Gaz tells Dave off: 'Are you gonna just stand there while some poof is waving his tackle at your missis?! Where is your pride man?! She's already got you hoovering! I saw it and I let it go. But this? No, no, no. You wanna get her out of there and tell her what for.' Later Dave makes quite a few resentful remarks about Jennifer Beals' welding skills, calls *Flashdance* 'some chuffin' women's DIY video', unceremoniously nicknames her 'flashy tit', and reminds Gaz that he 'can weld better than her an' all'. Later, Gerald reassures Dave: 'Fat, David, is a feminist issue' and after Dave demands a clarification all he says is: 'I do not bloody know, do I? But it is'. All these remarks are clearly meant to be comic, but their disregard for basic respect – let alone political correctness – remains. Furthermore, the sexualisation the above-mentioned groupings can stand for is not totally performed, since, for example, the promise for a total strip is not fulfilled for cinema audiences. The six men are never fully objectified through a female gaze from outside the film world, since the point of view moves upstage and hides the full-frontal nudity everybody in the audience sees.

Donna Summer's 'Hot Stuff' returns another three times, and accompanies three important moments of their rise to success – the first group rehearsal in the factory where, after several interruptions, they start getting it right; the legendary dole queue scene; and Gaz going through the moves at home, looking for reassurance. Another significant musical selection is Sister Sledge's 'We Are Family' while the men are hanging out at Gerald's, sharing their anxieties about the forthcoming performance. 'We Are Family' aptly introduces a scene where their male bonding fails as Dave confesses his concern about how the women who see him naked may judge him, confronting everybody with this traditionally womanly anxiety. The lyrical content clashes against their inability to 'be family' and support one another without increasing the general anxiety levels. Again, the potential for a

connection between the six men and the women singing the song they are playing is jeopardised by their unfortunate remarks. Or is it?

While finding out which audiences liked *The Full Monty* and why is not one of my primary concerns here, I would suggest that songs could encourage members of marginalised groups who are aurally represented through their music to identify with the marginalised men visible in the film. The musical materials for cross-group identifications are available, and perhaps audiences may leave the theatre believing that they have seen a story about inclusion as much as they might believe that they have seen the men going for 'the full monty'. Music can adorn the characters' identities, providing a connection between their story and other stories of marginalisation, of success despite adverse conditions, of redemption, and enhancing their sexualisation where necessary. These ideas are sourced from other cultural identities and are not limited by where Gaz and friends come from, because music can connect their stories to a wider network of related experiences where their inclusive success perhaps resonates louder than their exclusive words. But because other narrative aspects are present which can undermine the credibility of a seemingly inclusive story about working one's way through adversity, the direction loosely suggested via the songs might leave audiences unconvinced. While Gaz and friends entertain despite several faux pas, *The Full Monty* shows – and plays – a colourful soundscreen, but without a clear unified narrative backing voice to sustain these hopes, its inclusive success story may crumble.

Twin Town

The Other Man's Grass Is Always Greener

Hyped as 'the Welsh *Trainspotting*' – largely because of the involvement, as executive producers, of *Trainspotting*'s producer Andrew MacDonald and director Danny Boyle – *Twin Town* tells the odd vengeance story of the 'Lewis Twins' (real-life brothers Llyr and Rhys Ifans), local crook Bryn Cartwright (William Thomas) and his pet corrupt policemen, Greyo (Dorien Thomas), and Terry (Dougray Scott). The twins spend their time joyriding through the streets of Swansea in stolen fast

cars, smoking pot, and generally doing nothing until their father, Fatty (Huw Ceredig), is injured while working without insurance on Bryn's building site. After Bryn refuses to offer any compensation the twins begin to exact their revenge, initially through trivial deeds, which quickly instigate progressively nastier behaviour by both parties, growing increasingly vicious until they finally result in a few murders.

Twin Town's clash against traditional imagery of Welsh culture, of which Terry's profane rhyming description of Swansea as a 'pretty shitty city' is a perfect epitome, is articulated through several aspects of the film's textual world. Again, while the dialogue and the visuals are often central to discourse about the film and the image of Wales it creates, its soundtrack does not enter the discussion and its few Welsh songs are generally assumed to support whichever meaning the other aspects offer. Julia Hallam, for example, notes how:

> The film uses a rich amalgam of South Wales dialect, Welsh language phrases and familiar swear words combined with the irreverent treatment of distinctively Welsh signifiers, such as a rugby ball stuffed with bags of cocaine and the vandalising of the rugby pitch by the Lewis twins. Even so, if other local signifiers replaced the details of language and imagery, they would still produce the same meaning. *Twin Town*, like *Trainspotting*, treats images of national identity as impoverished signifiers of a bankrupt culture that has difficulty adjusting to forces of modernisation and change.
>
> (Hallam 2000, pp. 269-70)

Local musical signifiers are present but their treatment is not quite 'irreverent'; their narrative treatment, I believe, can produce different views of Welsh culture, unveiling nuances of *Twin Town*'s Wales that words and disregard for rugby alone cannot suggest. Welsh traditional music is not exactly portrayed as a vanishing relic whereas, I shall argue, the sound of a recent past becomes associated with that side of Swansea where the real 'bankrupt culture' seems prevalent. *Twin Town* shows another 'local' culture whose signifiers coexist with those traditionally associated with Wales as well as those of contemporary youth culture, producing a complex picture where Wales is neither idyllically painted as a land steeped in history nor crudely shot as mobsters' paradise.

Other literature where *Twin Town* earns a few paragraphs, (see, for example, Luckett 2000) seems to begin to unravel issues of nation, identity, and their

representations, but the England-Wales dualism still constitutes the central focal point. However, while music is not extensively discussed, there are allusions regarding sound and its possibilities:

> *Twin Town* plays with the idea that sound might represent national specificity, with its use of the Welsh language, its reference to Dylan Thomas and the Male Voice Choir so loved by the twins' father. Sound is generally regarded as secondary in its power and importance in visual media like film, but as *Twin Town* reminds us, it is also infinitely pervasive and affective. Similarly, *Brassed Off* and *The Full Monty* link sound to regional identity, using the brass band to suggest local pride and the centrality of masculinity, both phenomena eroded by a southern hegemony equated with consumerism and an obsession with image. […] Sound – particularly music – comes to stand for a regional refusal to acquiesce to imperial or metropolitan power. At the end of *Twin Town*, the twins' father's funeral is accompanied by a large choir, and a Welsh flag draped on his coffin as a testament to national pride. Associated with loss, these sounds locate Welsh nationalism as an almost bygone tradition that, despite all the odds, refuses to die.
>
> (Luckett 2000, pp. 93-4)

While sound certainly can represent national specificity, considering the way music and sound are woven into what is still unfortunately defined as 'visual media' is utterly vital to analysing cinematic texts and the positions films offer for their audiences. As I suggest above, *The Full Monty*'s brass band can signify more than regional identity, local pride, and masculinity, because its audiovisual placement affects the way its meaning articulates those men's story. The way these connotations articulate their story largely depends on the music's narrative place. Consequently, a musical genre whose predominant cinematic use recalls such positive ideas might spell exclusion and gloom for those hearing it from outside the dimension the music signifies. As I shall illustrate through the following pages, the male voice choir that accompanies Fatty Lewis's funeral similarly accrues further meaning, turning into more than just 'a testament to national pride', and their songs, alongside the other songs in the film's soundtrack, express a complex picture of culture(s) in contemporary Wales.

The current literature about *Twin Town* seems to focus on aural signifiers of Welsh culture as opposed to English (see, for example, Hallam's remarks about linguistic aspects and Luckett's identification of the male voice choir as an aural representative of national specificity). However, there are several songs without any

obvious Welsh connections, while others are performed by a Welsh act, but do not necessarily stand for Welshness in a traditional sense. The non-Welsh songs are quite obviously divided between two groupings: past and present. The lengthy opening sequence establishes the audiovisual partition of *Twin Town*'s narrative world between these two spatially close – yet culturally set apart – universes. After the roaring engine of a BMW 525 is heard on the opening credits, the car lands on an empty residential alley, a cut to a view of Swansea accompanied by seagull cries follows, after which Petula Clark's 'The Other Man's Grass Is Always Greener' is heard as the audience is presented with a panning panoramic shot of the city. The song intro's minor key gradually moves towards a major key, but there are a few interesting audiovisual aspects arising along the way. The section clearly heard in the opening sequence reads as follows:

Life is never what it seems	Verse 1
We're always searching in our dreams	
To find that little castle in the air	
When worry starts to cloud the mind	
It's hard to leave it all behind	
And just pretend you haven't got a care	
There's someone else in your imagination	Verse 2
You wish that you were standing in their shoes	
You'd change your life without much hesitation	
But would you if you really had to choose?	
So don't look around	Bridge
Get your feet on the ground	
It's much better by far	
To be just who you are	
The other man's grass is always greener	Chorus
The sun shines brighter on the other side	
The other man's grass is always greener	
Some are lucky, some are not	
Just be thankful for what you've got	

The opening verse remains minor until the end and accompanies the panoramic shots. The key changes to major on the second verse, where girls and boys are shown playing on a slope in slow motion. Shortly after, the hopeful feeling the major key and the lyrical content suggested in the second verse becomes reduced on the bridge, where the key momentarily returns towards minor, and a gallery of local characters

unfolds, still gripped in slow motion, from what we eventually realise is the point of view of the Lewis twins in the car. The chorus finally establishes a major key and accompanies a few extravagant-looking men and women, all seemingly not among the 'lucky' few Petula Clark sings about.

After the major key becomes fully established on the chorus, the message delivered lyrically seems to match the hopeful feeling the major key carries, but something feels unfulfilled. While the chorus could be interpreted as a celebration of what one has got as opposed to a pessimistic focussing on what one has not got, the overall premise seems odd given the piece's opening lines about feeling forlorn in hard times, matched musically by a minor key, and the hopes for changes expressed lyrically as the major key first appears. The audiovisual point where the music temporarily slips towards a minor key, I would argue, may undermine the hopeful message in the chorus. As the hopes for potential changes expressed in the second verse disappear, the minor key returns on the point where doubt about seeking changes looms on the question mark and accompanies quite different ideas about being realistic and content about one's situation in the bridge, halfway through which the eccentric but distinctively working-class figures replace the girls and boys playing and start acknowledging the twins' point of view. The odd looks and eccentrically colourful attires a few passers-by sport add a strange irony, accentuated by the minor key looming for a few moments despite the forthcoming answers the lyrical content anticipates. These contradictions between the music's direction and the lyrical content in the music, alongside similar contradictions between the passers-by's obvious class condition and the excessive jolly colourfulness several amply display in the visuals produce a strangely eerie audiovisual combination, dampening the hopefulness the chorus tries to encourage. As the twins drive through Swansea, two men give them the finger on the words 'some are not' and 'for what you've got', which makes their gesture look like a justifiably scornful response to those happy-go-lucky words. The closing lines add further irony, since the car the twins obviously stole shows how they are not exactly thankful for what they have got. Interestingly, these first few minutes construct a strange musical and audiovisual ambiguity about

the ideas in the lyrical content using the music I later associate with Bryn Cartwright, whom many, as will become apparent, regard as 'the other man'.[27]

After the chorus 'The Other Man's Grass' cross fades to Stereolab's 'Metronomic Underground' on the first shot showing the inside of the car, which means one assumes the music is playing on the car stereo. However, its volume remains unchanged as the POV moves outside the car and the music clearly turns out to be neither playing on the car stereo nor totally outside the film world – the dimension Kassabian (2001) calls source scoring, which could be defined as a kind of 'space scoring' since it marks 'the twins doing their thing' or 'the twins expressing their culture'. 'Metronomic Underground' accompanies the twins alone in the car, decreases and increases in volume depending on where the car is with respect to the frame, and stops on the sound of the closing door after the old couple the twins are meeting, Mr and Mrs Mort (Ronnie Williams and Buddug Williams), get inside the car. While the twins and Mrs Mort are talking about the drugs she is selling, her husband tells the boys: 'There's a welcome for you both in the choir practice. Your father is a fine tenor, it'd be a shame to break the mould, innit?'

This sequence introduces three broad musical groupings and the world these groupings stand for.

- 'The Other Man's Grass', the first of a series of past hits predominantly by English singers, is heard as a dramatic song in a montage sequence showing several happy – and quite a few odd-looking – Swansea residents on a sunny day;
- 'Metronomic Underground' introduces current popular songs by English and Welsh bands, another category that will recur throughout the soundtrack as the aural signifier of the twins' world – and generally the 'other' of that introduced by 'The Other Man's Grass';
- Traditional Welsh music, which is not heard yet, but becomes readily associated with two of the older characters, Mrs and Mr Mort – who, however, are not completely outside the world defined through current popular songs.

[27] I would like to acknowledge Freya Jarman-Ivens's great help in the harmonic analysis that underpins the point I elaborate above.

The other Swansea residents and the twins are immediately set apart through music, but the Morts are placed somewhere different. She is first shown dealing her NHS prescription drugs and placing her order for magic mushrooms, while he tries to recruit the twins for the choir by using the emotional trigger of family tradition. Their ambiguous image and the mixed message offered later by other characters defined through their Welsh traditional music connections makes labelling these figures as plain representatives of traditional Wales quite problematic. I shall elaborate on the issue of representations of Welshness where I discuss these songs' narrative placement. The two audible universes – the twins' dimension and the outside world – are set apart through other aspects. Besides unfolding in slow motion, the 'outside world' appears strangely colourful and its brightness contrasts against the shots showing the twins in the car, where the colours are dim and the light greyish. While Mrs and Mr Mort too are wearing colourful clothes, their initial placement outside the car changes, as they are allowed inside. The Morts oddly never express disapproval of the twins' lifestyle and, however naively, justify their behaviour, their compliments about their 'company car' revealing their genuine ignorance of the boys' illegal pastime.

Mr Mort clearly knows Fatty Lewis through choir practice. After being mentioned, Welsh traditional music first appears in the following scene featuring music, where a nondescript synthesised cue opens as dramatic score on the first glimpse of the trailer park where the Lewis family home is located, and swiftly changes aural perspective on the cut to their living room, where the twins' parents are singing 'Myfanwy', Jean (Di Botcher) playing the keyboards while Fatty assembles a model plane, and their daughter Adie (Rachel Scorgie) paints her toenails. While at first there is no visible source for the synth cue, the way the sound changes clearly positions it somewhere in the trailer. The synth cue and 'Myfanwy' share the aural space where the two generations are shown sharing the living room of their home. Later the way the synth cue stops reveals its disguised source: its metronomic sound comes from Jean's keyboards, and she turns off the cue after their performance. (I say disguised because the cue and their singing are out of time – which, alongside the instrumentation, gives their performance its amateur character.)

Their amateur rendition of 'Myfanwy' is quite interesting. It makes concessions to a non-traditional musical accompaniment, which roughly matches the unusual way the Morts are represented insofar as its traditional credentials and the synthesised sound coexist, as do Mr Mort's declared male voice choir membership and Mrs Mort's unusual illicit pastime as a small time dealer of NHS prescription drugs who sprinkles magic mushrooms on her husband's fish fingers. 'Myfanwy' is represented as a quite complex voicing of Welshness where its traditional meaning meets the aural signifier of another, non-traditional musical culture – a comparatively placeless yet quietly pervasive keyboards-synthesiser combo. The meaning(s) Welsh traditional music articulates through its first audiovisual placement is not straightforward; the materials these musical practices and their purveyors scatter around *Twin Town* can offer different interpretations. However, the one consistent picture of a (musical) culture resisting adverse circumstances and forging new alliances emerges through all these appearances. After Fatty's and Jean's performance of 'Myfanwy', accompanied by their surrogate for a traditional organ (cheaper, 'synthetic', and yet 'good enough' for the purpose), and Mr Mort's recruiting efforts, Fatty's declaration of his passion for Welsh choir music strengthens the tie between the two couples and Welsh traditional music in a progression towards revealing the enemies of Welsh music and culture. Dai Reese (Brian Hibbard), who works for Bryn running his karaoke bar and other errands, is driving Fatty and his associate, Dodgy (David Hayman), to work at Bryn's rugby club. His remarks about how 'karaoke has mileage' provoke Fatty's bluster against Dai: 'Hey, karaoke is what's killing the fucking Welsh choir music, Dai. Can't beat a male voice choir, that's what you call proper fucking singing.' Fatty's words clearly highlight two of the groupings I delineate above – the classic hit songs Dai and Dodgy perform in their karaoke shows on one side, and the Welsh traditional music the Lewises and the Morts are defending on the other.

While Welsh choir music appears earlier, karaoke does not feature until later in the film. The first karaoke scene bears a careful description. Petula Clark's voice returns during a montage sequence showing a night on the town, as 'Downtown' enters as dramatic song on the initial shots, where it fades in among motorbike engines and accompanies drunk young women squealing, the kebab house crowded by drunk customers, a nocturnal traffic jam created by a man doing push-ups in the

middle of the road, until a long shot of a neon sign takes the music onstage at Barons, Bryn's karaoke bar. There, Dai and Dodgy are encouraging the crowd to participate in a sing-along where Clark's voice and the singing crowd overlap. The world initially shown through the twins' joyriding point of view as 'The Other Man's Grass' accompanied their journey returns, invoked by another of Petula Clark's classic tunes. The way 'Downtown' changes dimension from dramatic to source music seals the connection between the world everybody but the Lewis twins and their entourage of family and friends inhabit on the one hand, and those who gravitate around the karaoke bar and its owner, Bryn on the other hand. Past hits by English artists become steadily associated with Bryn's little empire. The dimension shift plays a significant role in strengthening the tie between the classic hit songs, the world outside the twins' territory, and Bryn, since the aural signifier of that anonymous outside world and of those surrounding Bryn is drawn into their territory, which happens to be Bryn's territory. It is as if finding everybody but the twins and their entourage singing a Petula Clark song in Bryn's club suddenly pulled everyone together into one big 'other half' of Swansea where neither the Lewises nor the Morts ever go. What happens when 'Downtown' goes from dramatic to source music is made possible by the connotative meaning Petula Clark's songs and the other classic tunes acquire earlier. Prior to 'Downtown', other 'vintage' songs score a scene set somewhere on Bryn's property. Dana's 1975 Christmas hit 'It's Going To Be A Cold Cold Xmas (Without You)'[28] is heard seemingly playing on the radio while Fatty, Dai, and Dodgy are repairing the roof at Bryn's rugby club. Dai and Dodgy are shown using their bare bottoms as drums, after which Dai sings along brandishing his hammer like a microphone, while Fatty grins and continues working. Dai's karaoke persona briefly emerges and the connection between the two self-proclaimed karaoke kings and classic hit songs first becomes audible on Bryn's property.

[28] Dana's song is the one partial exception among the songs related to Bryn, as Dana is Irish, not English. However, the piece's 'Christmas hit' status, I think, overrides its singer's nationality for the musical groupings I propose, since the songs' international success stories construct Bryn and his as the winners. The singers' origins – which, despite Dana being Irish, are still predominantly English – are not a prominent and distinctive feature the way their hit songs are, and set the Cartwrights and the Lewises apart insofar as no music by Welsh singers or bands accompanies the Cartwrights whereas the Lewises and their friends claim all the Welsh traditional music and Welsh pop bands. Bonnie Cartwright's performance of 'Calon Lan', as I discuss later, is a fascinating exception to these musical divisions.

Shortly after, Mungo Jerry's 'In the Summertime' accompanies the twins' incursion on the rugby pitch in a Cobra, a 1960s sports car. While Jerry's international hit primarily follows the twins, scoring their unrepentant violation of a clear signifier of Welshness, the way the roaring engine of the English vintage car they stole and a great hit song by an English band share the aural space bears further consideration. Besides symbolising Welshness, the rugby pitch belongs to Bryn, which gives their incursion a twofold meaning. The twins are disrespecting rugby and Bryn's rugby pitch whilst inside a car that is a clear signifier of a wealthy lifestyle – which, while obviously unavailable to the twins, perfectly matches Bryn's persona – and Englishness. The twins are not appropriating the Cobra and 'In the Summertime' is not their music. Their 'borrowing' is a mocking of Bryn's pretensions and of Welsh stereotypes through music and a car which symbolise success, affluence, and Englishness at the same time. The twins steal the Cobra and are shown driving through country roads wearing the owner's slick sunglasses and pulling faces while 'In the Summertime', which quite clearly belongs with 'The Other Man's Grass' (another 1960s hit for a leading English act), aurally completes their offensive. The twins' simultaneous affront against Bryn's world and a traditional Welsh signifier (the rugby pitch), which happens to be Bryn's property, is perpetrated using a vintage English car and a vintage English hit playing somewhere between their world and its outside, alongside the Cobra's roaring engine. Besides disrespecting rugby, the twins love football; furthermore, while Bryn is a rugby fan, his respect for the one Welsh tradition he upholds becomes tainted towards the end – a narrative twist which I shall discuss later. A brief and quiet musical incursion through the late '90s follows while Bryn's men are playing darts at a local pub, where 'Good Enough' by English pop group Dodgy and 'Bad Behaviour' by Welsh rockers Super Furry Animals feature as source music playing somewhere in the background. But the vintage soundtrack swiftly returns as soon as we go back to Bryn's territory. 'Penthouse Suite', a sparkling '70s flavoured instrumental piece known for being the theme tune for *Tarrant On TV*, enters on the end of the previous sequence, bridges the cut between the two, and accompanies the panning descent of the camera that reveals the Cartwrights' seaside villa and their poodle, whose point of view running towards the house follows, introducing the lengthy sequence where Bryn's affluence becomes clearly visible.

Later, a few shots showing the inscription ‘Ponderosa’ above the villa’s gates uncover a curious intertextual link. Bryn’s surname and his house are obvious references to US Western television series *Bonanza* (1959-1973) where Ben Cartwright and his three sons are a non-traditional all-men family, who own a wealthy ranch named Ponderosa in mid-1800s Nevada (LaPastina 2010). While exploring the parallels between the two fictional Cartwright’s remains outside the scope of the thesis, being a wealthy landowner is a fundamental feature Ben and Bryn share. Furthermore, LaPastina notes how the producers thought about the Ponderosa as a fifth character in *Bonanza* and quotes Brauer and Brauer, who ‘argue that this emphasis on the "piece of land" was symbolic of a shift in emphasizing mobility, the lone wanderer, with his gun and horse to a focus on the settle [*sic*] landowner. These changes also led to a restructuring of the leading characters' role in the community.’ (1975, quoted in LaPastina 2010). Bryn may not share the armed horse-riding lone wanderer persona *Bonanza*’s Cartwrights represent, but his character matches the image of a settled landowner doing something for his community as the rugby and karaoke club owner who employs local men, which effectively hides his dark side in the eyes of many. Overall, the *Bonanza*-related intertext and all the old hit songs weave a close connection between the success story Ben Cartwright’s character, the hit singers, and Bryn share.

Interestingly, the songs accompany Bryn’s offspring and all those whose aspirations match his lifestyle. The way Dai’s makeshift performance of ‘It’s Going To Be A Cold Cold Xmas’ and his orchestrating the crowd singing along to ‘Downtown’ construct his character through karaoke mimicries of the hit songs of others, strangely mirrors his and his associate Dodgy’s lives spent in the shadow of the success – musical and otherwise – of others like Bryn. Dai and Dodgy are often shown reaping the benefit from Bryn’s accomplishments and their attempt to project those successful songs’ glory onto their karaoke personae takes place on Bryn’s territory, where the soundtrack follows the classic hit songs trend started in the opening sequence. ‘Crazy Mixed-Up Girl’, performed by real-life Swansea local celebrity Martin Ace, is co-written by Ace himself and Paul Durden, but his Elvis-style vocal performance somewhat effaces its originality and gives the piece a strange ‘oldie’ quality. Later, Bonnie Cartwright (Jenny Evans), Bryn’s daughter, sings ‘Calon Lan’, a traditional Welsh chant, for their dog’s funeral. Given the

classic hit songs accompaniment which distinguishes Bryn's world throughout the film, a traditional piece performed in Welsh is a notable exception, but the sad circumstances place 'Calon Lan' somewhere neutral despite its unusual context – there are not any other Welsh songs heard on Bryn's territory.

The following cue marks the beginning of a vicious cycle of revenge between the twins on one side, and Bryn and his corrupt policemen on the other. Through the whole story Dai maintains a secret affair with Bonnie. One night Bryn gives him a bribe to secure her victory in the karaoke competition. While Bonnie sings Gloria Gaynor's 'I Will Survive' the twins enter the club through the toilet windows and deliver their first act of revenge where, hidden backstage behind the stage curtain, they proceed to urinate on Bonnie and provoke a massive punch-up, which creates diversion, allowing them to escape. Later, once at a safe distance from their crime scene, the twins are shown walking along badly lit streets singing Swansea FC anthems. Again, Bonnie sings a passionless imitation of a 1970s classic, reinforcing the association between past hits and Bryn's world. The twins' first act of revenge takes place on Bryn's territory, but targets his offspring while she is voicing his world's culture. Bonnie is targeted while singing a karaoke version of a piece which clearly belongs to the musical category used to define Bryn's world and stops singing, ironically, after the lines 'Just turn around now/You're not welcome anymore', while Dai and Dodgy uncover the twins zipping up their jeans. The music swiftly comes to a dramatic halt, as a piano chord fills the silence, but strangely neither Dai nor Dodgy are visibly responsible for these aural changes. A reprise of a karaoke version of 'I Will Survive' follows and accompanies the montage sequence showing the ensuing brawl, where slow motion and regular speed alternate in a cartoon-style progression of violent vignettes depicting the twins' enemies as a bunch of yobbish, inept vandals who start a fight and let the offenders run off.

Later, Bryn and Terry leave the restaurant where the Cartwrights and their friends are sitting after Bryn spots the twins defiantly staring through the glass doors, devouring chips. A chase follows and, as soon as Bryn becomes aware of their whereabouts, a 1950s-style jangly guitar and organ score enters, and continues through the twins' beating, Adie and Greyo at the latter's holiday home, and a party at the Ponderosa, the Cartwrights' villa. The music fades out where Bryn's wife screams, leaving a clichéd ominous sustained sound to build up tension for the

Godfather-style close up of their poodle's severed head on the bed accompanied by a deafening sound similar to a thunderclap, vaguely reminiscent of horror soundtracks. The dog's funeral features Bonnie singing 'Calon Lan', a traditional Welsh chant – the first and last time traditional Welsh music is heard on Bryn's territory, and a quite significant shift towards the Other's music, especially given how later Bonnie is among the few survivors of Bryn's world. Later Dai and Bonnie watch the faraway ships in the bay and enjoy clandestine sex in Dai's truck while the radio plays Joe Dolan's 1977 hit 'I Need You', the final vintage track heard in a scene where Bryn's entourage feature prominently.

After revenge between the twins and Cartwright's men culminates in a fire that was meant to kill the Lewis' dog but instead kills all the Lewis family but the dog and the twins, a few interesting narrative turns ensue. Bryn's involvement in the killing becomes known to Greyo, and Bryn reminds the two policemen about two packs of cocaine covered in their fingerprints, putting Greyo and Terry at Bryn's mercy. The drugs are concealed in a rugby ball in Bryn's office. Kate Woodward regards Bryn's profane use of a traditional signifier of Wales as a 'clear subversion of the traditionalist values associated with rugby, masculinity and Welshness' (2006, p. 59). In addition to the subversive quality of Bryn's gesture, his violation exposes his falseness, and his performance of a wealthy yet wholesome family guy quickly falls apart, initiating his descent towards chaos and finally death. Earlier Bryn invokes a legendary rugby match, but immediately after his lyrical reminiscing of the players' joint achievement he is framing Terry and Greyo, his own teammates – another reprehensible gesture devaluing the loyalty between Bryn and his men. Shortly after, Terry and Greyo's attempt to frame Dai reveals the latter's secret affair with Bonnie. The discovery enrages Bryn, who shows his violent disposition in the scene where he beats Bonnie, drags her around by her hair, and finally pushes her and her mother, who was defending her, into their swimming pool.

The twins' final act of revenge, obviously triggered by Bryn's bad deeds – from denying compensation after Fatty broke his leg while working for him to instructing Terry to execute the twins' dog, killing their whole family instead – is accompanied by songs belonging to their world. While the twins are shown preparing Bryn's hanging by tying him to a moving part of the garage door, Moloko's 'Butterfly 747' is heard as a dramatic song. Later, Catatonia's 'You've Got A Lot To

Answer For' plays somewhere in Terry's house while the twins pay him their final visit. These songs are performed by contemporary British artists, and Catatonia are among the exponents of *Cool Cymru*[29] – Wales' version of *Cool Britannia* – which clearly positions them in the 1990s popular music that connotes the twins' world. The two songs accompany Bryn's and Terry's killers, aurally reminding the perceiver about their looming presence as Bryn walks towards where the twins await him, and preceding their arrival as 'You've Got a Lot to Answer for' is playing in Terry's house, musically marking the twins' territory in their enemies' homes. Bryn's disrespectful and often violent behaviour becomes shorthand for his mercilessness and, while the twins' regular involvement in petty crime is portrayed extensively, Bryn's chances of being granted forgiveness quickly disappear after his final capital sin – killing the twins' parents and sister – spins his existence out of control.

Earlier, a confrontation between Terry and a kid playing in a kazoo band marks Terry as the enemy for those defined through traditional music. Greyo and Terry are driving up a road where the kazoo band are playing the theme from Z-Cars, wearing a traditional costume and holding a Welsh flag. Based on a traditional folk song known as 'Johnny Todd', the piece was adopted as the opening chant for every Everton F.C. match since the 1960s, after being in the UK charts following its use in the Liverpool-set TV drama Z-Cars.[30] The way the piece's evolution links a traditional folk song to a football song via a TV theme song roughly resembles the bizarre connections *Twin Town* makes between the twins' current popular music and their parents' and friends' traditional music. Terry calls the kids 'little cunts' and exits the car telling everybody to move, but one kid confronts him. The kid calls Terry a 'wanker', Terry crushes his kazoo, the kid kicks him, Terry punches him and shows everybody his badge, threatening charges for obstruction. After Terry calls everybody 'Welsh bastards'[31], the two policemen drive off among an impromptu

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[29] Sarah Hill defines *Cool Cymru* as 'the media-inspired moniker […] denoting the seemingly sudden emergence of Welsh artists – Manic Street Preachers, Stereophonics, Catatonia, and Super Furry Animals – onto the British and American charts.' (2007, p. 93).

[30] I would like to acknowledge Ian Gardiner's great help in identifying the piece, since its title did not feature in the end credits.

[31] While Terry's origins are never mentioned, Dougray Scott has clearly not abandoned his Scottish accent for the character. Terry's comment justifies narratively unsupported ideas about his origins – probably Scottish, obviously not Welsh. Interestingly, the one non-Welsh character works for Bryn. However, Terry's alleged Scottishness seems a strange choice, since the Welsh and the Scots are not known for disliking one another.

kazoo rendition of ‘Dance of the Cuckoo’. While there are not any obvious narrative connections between the kazoo band and the twins’ entourage, the music and the Welsh flag combine to place their performance close to the Lewises and their friends. The clash between Terry and the kazoo band constitutes the first narrative event where the animosity between the two sides becomes visible – and audible. At the point where the fight happens, Fatty has already injured himself, but revenge has not yet started. While I could not ascertain whether these bands usually carry flags, the scene positions the Welsh flag alongside a musical union between old and new, which, I argue, strengthens the association between Welshness, those defined through traditional music, and those defined through current popular music. Later, other Welsh symbols are engaged interestingly – and sometimes unusually – in a few sequences involving the twins and Bryn.

Towards the end, the twins steal a hot dog van instead of going to their beloved parents and sister’s funeral, drive towards the hills overlooking Swansea, and prepare a hashish-and-magic-mushrooms-flavoured hot dog. A man who closely resembles the stereotypical representations of a Welsh simpleton as Woodward (2006) describes appears accompanied by a sheep dog and purchases their ‘magic’ hot dog. After the funeral service, the twins steal the hearse and Fatty’s coffin, and drive up the same road, where their ingenuous customer is sitting in the grass naked, plausibly splitting his sides with laughter under the ‘magic’ hot dog’s influence. Woodward notes how ‘Old themes are lampooned in this film to create a new version of Wales’ (p. 59) and cites the connection between Bryn and rugby as an example. The hot dog eater’s funny looks and naïveté clearly place him among these old Welsh cinematic stereotypes but his character becomes a caricatured version of these stereotypes and the twins are not disrespecting him the way Bryn disrespects rugby symbols. After unintentionally consuming the ‘magic’ hot dog, the man samples the twins’ lifestyle and appears quite happy, for obvious and not exactly spontaneous reasons, but nonetheless unharmed after his encounter. Similarly, Mrs. Mort purchases the twins’ ‘magic’ mushrooms for her and Mr. Mort’s consumption. Their Welsh credentials and their taste for the twins’ lifestyle reinforce the odd tie between the twins’ world and those defined through various Welsh symbols. The Morts and the The Welsh yokel personify a strange yet plausible union between the two

cinematic representations of Wales that the twins and their often naïve and vaguely surreal friends and new acquaintances represent.

Later, another strange juxtaposition happens between a Welsh signifier and a quite unusual musical piece. After Bryn loses control, the male voice choir members feature in another significant audiovisual cameo. The twins are shown walking towards the male voice choir rehearsal space where their dog, who escaped the explosion and reached the Morts' house, is waiting to be collected. The men are singing Mungo Jerry's 'In the Summertime', at first vaguely audible outside and finally filling the aural space of the church. After the twins' early 'borrowing' of a musical signifier of success, Englishness, and Bryn's world, the male voice choir's rendition of 'In the Summertime' – especially after Bryn's decline has begun – gains a twofold meaning. Their version can represent another 'borrowing' of a piece belonging to their and the twins' enemy's world, their own 'joyriding' in the bad guy's music, but in addition to their use of a piece of Bryn's soundtrack, the narrative point where their 'appropriation' happens is significant. Similarly to the twins' pitch incursion, the male voice choir's performance of 'In the Summertime' resembles a kind of aural gaining of ground over Bryn's losing team. By then 'In the Summertime' becomes the empty signifier of a crumbling world under whose ruins Bryn and Terry are about to be trapped forever. After the twins' early 'borrowing' through Mungo Jerry's version featuring on the dramatic soundtrack, the male voice choir members conquer the piece through their own rendition at a quite significant narrative point, an intermission between where first chaos and later death start erasing Bryn's world.

After Terry shows Dai a written declaration where Bonnie – coerced by Bryn – blows his alibi for the night the explosion slaughtered the Lewises, the twins approach the villa and begin their final act of revenge, hanging Bryn at the Ponderosa and tying Terry to Fatty's coffin when they fulfil their father's wish to be buried at sea. The final killing happens right after Bryn's hanging. The twins board his speedboat – which Bryn readily gives up alongside a car and some golf clubs in a useless attempt to inspire forgiveness – and, after sailing out onboard the umpteenth expropriated wealthy man's toy while the male voice choir furtively gathers on the pier to sing 'Myfanwy' for Fatty's burial at sea, the two throw Terry off the speedboat and watch him disappear underwater together with Fatty's coffin. A Welsh

flag follows their father and enemy in to the water – a scene irreverently crowned by a smoking game where who takes the next drag depends on how long the flag remains afloat. The twins make an impromptu decision to sail to Morocco and the vanishing speedboat zooming south gives way to a crane shot of the male voice choir performing on the pier as their singing, volume unchanged and now accompanied by non-source instruments, moves somewhere between the initial source dimension and the outside of the film world, and becomes source scoring, as if to aurally signify Fatty's journey towards his final resting place. The choir's final performance does not evoke a dying culture, but seals their – and the twins' – musical triumph over Bryn.

As I have tried to demonstrate, *Twin Town*'s controversial image of Wales does not straightforwardly denigrate its traditional symbols. A consideration of the interaction between songs, visuals and dialogue unveils a different cultural landscape, one where the dualism between modern England and traditional Wales hides a greater variety of less trodden or just less visible paths for identifications outside the stereotypical and, perhaps, a political message. While Bryn's wealthy crook persona dominates his character, the success and the happier, boom years his songs evoke can add a further political dimension. Bryn embodies a culture reminiscent of the Thatcherite ethos, where success for everybody and self-made-mannish imagery are held up as the ideal, but poverty remains virtually unnoticed – the differences between Bryn's and the Lewises' lives alone can justify arguing against viewing *Twin Town* as a smear on Wales' image. While the film does present a tough image of Wales, what it certainly does not do is present traditional Welsh culture as bankrupt – and the Lewis twins, perhaps through their traditional Welsh connections, support network, and fight against the wealthy selfish villain, are saved, too. The truly 'bankrupt culture' is Bryn's greed for accumulation and consumption at all costs, and his character's 'bad behaviour', to quote Super Furry Animals' end credits track, is ferociously condemned in the film's finale. After the choir singing 'Myfanwy' on the pier, the Super Furry Animals track playing on the end credits aurally seals the victory for the two sides defined through those musical groupings against the villain and his hit man. The music, as I hope to have illustrated, plays a paramount role in the fabrication of these conflicting spheres in *Twin Town* and, I

believe, can uncover fascinating nuances where all its critics have seen are the colours of a national flag.

Conclusion

I would like to close this chapter with some general reflections about how considering music could enter the discourse on the sense of place these films offer. About the three films I discuss and *Brassed Off*, Hallam says that 'Although formally and aesthetically diverse, these films all foreground a sense of place in their use of location shooting and vernacular dialogue.' (2000, p. 266) Their sense of place is prominently seen and heard in *Trainspotting*'s Edinburgh and London, *The Full Monty*'s Sheffield, and *Twin Town*'s Swansea, but these films, I would add, sound their sense of place – physical as well as cultural – through their soundtracks in less obvious, more nuanced ways than filming locations and broad accents alone can achieve. These films' sense of place is articulated through the way the characters inhabit their urban environment, but how popular music fills their world through its visual presence, the odd passing reference in the dialogues, the characters' musical choices (source), and the way songs weave their meanings into the narrative when they accompany their stories from the outside (dramatic) can offer other paths for identifications that take us beyond the place where the stories are set.

For Renton and his peers, the non-junky Edinburgh of which we catch a brief glimpse is chiefly a place to pillage and exploit, and Scotland a nation to despise. This is exemplified in the film's opening sequence running to 'Lust For Life', and the 'Nightclubbing' sequence, where Iggy Pop songs signify the junkies' momentary ownership of those locations. Interestingly, the 'Nightclubbing' sequence follows their group venture towards the great outdoors, where Renton vents his anger against Tommy's Scottish pride, and Iggy Pop's voice marks their alternative to Tommy's clean, respectable lifestyle. Songs set the 'junkdom' apart from the clean, respectable world, as well as from Renton's resolutions to give up heroin and get back – more or less spontaneously – to society, which are often accompanied by Britpop or electronic dance music.

For Gaz and the other DIY strippers, their old abandoned workplace becomes a clandestine rehearsal space where songs are the catalyser for their deliverance. The six men reclaim the empty steel factory through a selection of songs associated with other marginalised groups. The three sequences where Donna Summer's 'Hot Stuff' reappears after being first heard where the Chippendale-style strippers perform for the local women, exemplify how music becomes the vehicle through which the men reclaim the steel factory, the Job Centre, and their masculine pride. However, the diverse and inclusive group picture the film shows regains pride through the songs of a marginalised Other that is extensively defused or disregarded by Gaz and the other white males, undermining the multicultural offer the film makes available on the surface level.

For the Lewis twins, Swansea is a battlefield where revenge against Bryn and his men becomes a war between the wealthy crook and the disadvantaged but comparatively respectable men who pay for Bryn's greed. The songs surrounding the twins accompany their victories against their enemy, and alliances – visible and audible – are built between the younger and the older generations of the Lewis family members and friends, who are set against Bryn and his entourage through their different soundtracks. As the twins prevail on the enemy, first traditional Welsh choir music and later a piece by Welsh rockers Super Furry Animals pervade the sound track, sealing their final victory. Songs set the two enemy sides apart and, through their pre-cinematic baggage, add a further dimension to a story where feuds between the twins and their wealthy selfish nemesis map the Thatcherite ethos Bryn and his represent outside the twins' Swansea – which the two surviving Lewis's finally disinfest, killing Bryn and his hit man as the past hits disappear.

Considering these films' soundtracks shows how a musical signifier of a place can 'play' another, non-place-bound cultural identity in the film world and map its space inside or outside the dominant cultures in the textual field of the movie. *Trainspotting* initially makes available a few paths for identifications leading somewhere other than Scotland, England, and consumerist society, but later effaces these possibilities, which are gradually reassimilated by the dominant culture. *The Full Monty* links the marginalised jobless men and artists belonging to other marginalised groups, but through their often defensive – and sometimes offensive – behaviour their white men's culture remains exclusive despite its surface efforts

towards inclusivity. *Twin Town* marks its feuding sides apart through current British popular and Welsh traditional music vs. past hits largely by English artists, 'playing' further divisions in the narrative through the added meaning these musical groupings acquire through the story and finally pushing the Thatcherite ethos the bad guy and his men represent out of the film's audiovisual narrative. The broad place-bound identities offered at surface level can produce other identifications which, I argue, considering the music reveals and further complicates. However, these identifications developed using aural symbols of geographical locations and specific cultures can acquire further meaning through their narrative use and through the interaction between songs and other narrative aspects. Via these intra-narrative connections, secondary paths for identifications can surface and uncover the possibilities one filmic text can offer besides its obvious place-bound identities.

Earlier I quote a brief passage where Hallam notes how these three films and *Brassed Off* share 'their re-articulation of working-class identity through its relation to national and regional stereotypes and geographical marginalisation' (p. 268). I would propose inverting the order and drawing a few preliminary conclusions about how these films can offer a re-articulation of national and regional stereotypes and geographical marginalisation through their relation to working-class and other non-place-bound identities.

Renton and friends are shown raiding memorable central Edinburgh streets, reluctantly getting a taste of a picture-postcard, outdoors Scottish location, and looking for fortune in the glittering English capital, whereas their side of town looks anonymous and placeless. But while their negotiation of these locations quite clearly positions them on their margins, their world is a pulsating component, however concealed under the surface, of their locally inflected urban environment. Renton's take on Scottish identity does not place him and his friends totally outside their Scottish environment and temporary London setting. Instead, their dimension articulates a different facet of a cinematically invisible Scotland and unglamorously placeless London via society's margins and non-British songs, but gradually shows these alternate locations – and the alternative Renton and friends represented – as another assimilated component of British consumerist society.

Similarly, *The Full Monty*'s men are relegated outside their now empty workplace and the way Gaz and the other penniless strippers negotiate Sheffield

outside the factory positions their group at the margins of their urban environment and yet at the forefront of a different framing of a known cultural landscape – the urban industrial north of England and its working white males. Gaz and his mates attempt to escape their non-working-class environment and their attitudes towards the other half are not furiously disrespectful à la Renton, but nonetheless impertinent, sometimes barefacedly mocking, sometimes downright angry, and their impromptu visit to Gerald's suburban home to enjoy what is left of his middle-class lifestyle resembles a group of school kids on a clandestine fieldtrip to a candy shop. The way Gaz and the other DIY strippers negotiate their place in a new adverse condition does not situate their small community outside the locations where the culture they were part of once belonged, but rather places the six men within its limits and the narrative shows their reclamation of those locations. Gaz and friends fleetingly reclaim their working-class masculinities as they re-conquer their empty factory and the working men's club, tainted after its profanation by inauthentic strippers and all the women who flocked to watch their performance. Despite the final success, their efforts do not bring lasting changes, but the narrative tries to offer a different perspective on the regional stereotype of England's industrial north and its working-class males, not only by diversifying – however superficially and fruitlessly – the group's composition, but also by putting the 'non' in working class. While the music Gaz and friends use creates a connection between their world and other marginalised groups elsewhere, the narrative finally undercuts the inclusive picture *The Full Monty* tries to offer.

Finally, despite the outrage *Twin Town* stirred among defenders of Welsh national identity, the joyriding, pot-smoking Lewis twins do not destroy Welshness, but instead forge alliances with those defined through Welsh traditional music to counter their enemy – a wealthy merciless local crook who quickly becomes established as the villain, through his actions and through his music. Again, the way the twins negotiate their home town and its inhabitants does not place their world outside the Swansea the movie depicts and, despite their lives at the margins, the Lewises and their friends are not sitting on the ashes of a dying culture, but resisting against their culturally corrupt enemy and finally, although decimated, prevail. The Lewis twins may destroy old stereotypes, but their story does not degrade Welsh

culture. On the contrary, as I tried to demonstrate, *Twin Town* draws new paths for identifications surrounding Welshness on the cinematic map.

While it is outside my scope to attempt to track these paths comprehensively, I hope that what I discuss above goes some way towards showing the several possibilities film scholars leave unaddressed where music is not taken into consideration. Not only the cultural identities the films sound are potentially unheard without considering the music, but also the way these identities are positioned vis-à-vis the nations where the stories are set can re-articulate ideas about national and regional stereotypes and geographical marginalisation through the identities music 'plays' in their representations.

CHAPTER THREE

A Study of Popular Songs in Three Spanish Films

Scholarly attention for Spanish film music has grown sparsely over the 2000s, chiefly through contributions exploring the young field of Spanish film music studies from neighbouring subject areas. In the field of film music, the one edited volume featuring a chapter about Spanish cinema was *European Film Music* (Mera and Burnand 2006), where Kathleen M. Vernon and Cliff Eisen's piece addresses the soundtracks in the films of Carlos Saura and Pedro Almodóvar. Earlier studies about songs in Spanish films include Jo Evans' chapter on popular songs in Julio Medem's *La Ardilla Roja* (2002) and Kathleen M. Vernon's essay on songs in Pedro Almodóvar's films (2005).

A few years later, Santiago Fouz-Hernández and Ian Biddle began working on the films of the democratic era where singing and gender issues articulate the national imaginary. Their forthcoming chapter, 'Voicing Gender: Performativity, Nostalgia and the National Imaginary in Spanish Cinema of the Democratic Era' addresses films where the music deterritorialises gender and Spanishness. Their chapter is going to feature in the edited volume *Screening Songs in Hispanic and Lusophone Cinema* (Shaw and Stone, forthcoming), where other authors explore interesting questions about Spanish film music.

Another important publication where Spanish film music has a prominent place is a special issue of *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image* (2010) where guest editors Eduardo Viñuela-Suárez and Teresa Fraile-Prieto present a selection including writing about Spanish films and other audiovisual media. Among these contributions, Laura Miranda-González's piece about crusade films' soundtracks and gender, and Karen Poe Lang's article about boleros featuring in the films of Pedro Almodóvar discuss different instances where music articulates gender. Fraile-Prieto's monograph *Musica de Cine en España: Señas de Identidad en la Banda Sonora Contemporanea* (2010) alongside the special issue of which she and Viñuela-Suárez are guest editors, and the published and forthcoming contributions I mention above are obvious signs of a growing field, where representatives of a range of disciplines working on film music studies are producing scholarship about Spanish films and their soundtracks.

While these authors' different backgrounds produce a diverse and fascinating overall picture, their focus often bears clear signs of their discipline's subject preference – which predictably imposes a few recurrent limitations. Hence, writing by film studies academics still focuses predominantly on *auteurs*, leaving films by less established directors off the map, while musicologists are still drawn towards the great film music composers – two sides that often come together to produce studies about established director-composer pairs. Despite their often restricted scope, these contributions are shaping Spanish film music studies and pushing its growing scholarly community towards interesting and stimulating paths. However, the chronic disregard for popular films' compilation soundtracks, which a similar conjuncture has created for studies about Italian film music, affects writing about Spanish film music, too. Another usual suspect often featuring in discussions about Spanish soundtracks is national identity, a focus which, I argue, can obscure the way the music articulates other nuances, 'playing' other complex identities in the film's textual field. While I think hearing these identities can further our understanding of contemporary Spanish films, these other complex identities require consideration in the context of ideas about national identity. Their emergence can add a new dimension to debates about national identity, but not replace these debates. In the following pages I shall look at current contributions to Spanish film music studies and discuss their relevance for the present chapter.

Despite their restricted range, often these contributions uncover aspects of their films' aural worlds and offer reflections about their soundtracks that, despite not being central to their arguments, are essential for a new perspective on the materials songs offer for the delineation of different nuances of Spanish identity in 1990s popular films. Kathleen M. Vernon and Cliff Eisen's chapter on 'Contemporary Spanish Film Music: Carlos Saura and Pedro Almodóvar' (2006) follows oft-trodden paths, uniting the 'great directors-composers' and ideas about their film music and Spanishness, and yet, alongside other writing about songs in Spanish films, foregrounds the point I shall elaborate using a quite different Spanish film, Montxo Armendáriz's *Historias del Kronen*. After their initial justification for focussing the chapter 'on the works of Spain's most internationally celebrated directors of the last forty years' (p. 41), Vernon and Eisen proceed to outline their reasons in depth:

> Where the concept and function of the *auteur* does prove useful in framing our study of Spanish film music in the context of European cinema is with respect to the specific role of Saura and Almodóvar in signifying Spain and Spanish cinema to European and international spectators. What combination and expression of 'universal' themes and values and national specificity enabled Saura and Almodóvar, at very different historical moments, to project the dominant images of Spanishness to their European neighbours? And what part did their film music play, or not play, in that achievement?'
>
> (Vernon and Eisen 2006, p. 41, original emphasis)

The question I would add and try to answer is: 'Is there more to Saura and Almodóvar's films and other Spanish films than Spain and dominant images of Spanishness?' Writing about music's role in these directors' representations of Spain and Spanishness addresses crucial questions about Spanish cinema's identity through two different but equally difficult moments for Spanish culture; at the same time, its plurality is not allowed to surface in studies where the focus remains the dominant images – and sounds – of Spanishness. A broader focus, I suggest, can uncover Spanish films' diverse representations of Spain and Spanishness, letting its different – and often diverging – nuances break the deceptively still surface constructed by discourse about a dominant and homogenous image – and sound – of Spain.

Vernon and Eisen's argument that Luis de Pablo's and Alberto Iglesias' music for Saura's and Almodóvar's films has given Spanish cinema 'a new credibility and legibility' (p. 57) outside Spain is fascinating, but the point I am going to explore is a recurrent trope – perhaps a secondary one for their purpose – that appears several times in their description of de Pablo's score for Saura's films and emerges in other writing about Spanish film music, which I think calls for further attention. Despite the chapter's focus on director-composer pairs, Vernon and Eisen mention pre-existing music and songs several times in their section about de Pablo and Saura, but never explore the interaction between composed and pre-existing materials. In the introductory section, their brief overview of the history of Spanish film music briefly describes the 1980s as a time when 'the majority of films had recourse to pre-recorded music and popular songs' (2006, p. 43) and later a short aside specifies how 'the composed score [for *La Caza* (*The Hunt*, 1965)] coexists with a compiled musical track of derivative Spanish versions of 1960s US and French pop songs that emerge from one character's transistor radio' (p. 45) – a

seemingly significant exception which, however, remains limited to a brief parenthetical mention and does not receive any further thought.

The problematic coexistence between modern playback technology, traditional music and classical music in *La Madriguera* (*The Warren*, 1969) and *Peppermint Frappé* (1967) generates interesting reflections about the male protagonists' struggle to reconcile tradition and modernity in their lives. Later, the female protagonist of *Peppermint Frappé* is often described as equated with modernity and its threats for Spanish tradition, and her bad influence clearly emerges in the sequences accompanied by modern pieces, but these interesting audiovisual characterisations are not discussed any further.

Julián, the protagonist of *Peppermint Frappé*, becomes obsessively attracted to Elena, his friend's young foreign bride. The cue playing while Julián develops pictures of Elena – briefly described as 'a solo atonal organ' (p. 48) – can obviously suggest his disturbed psychological state, as the authors argue, but may signify Elena's corrupting presence as well as Julián's sick mind. Similarly, the way Elena's arrival seems to trigger 'the accumulation of sonorous layers […] in the formation of a complex sonic texture' (p. 49), leading to Julián poisoning Elena and his friend, seems to point towards another association between the unsettling soundtrack and a troublesome woman, which again is not mentioned. While the description Vernon and Eisen provide for *Peppermint Frappé*'s score alone cannot fully support the reading offered above, their remarks about *Ana y los lobos* (*Ana and the Wolves*, 1972) offer a clearer picture:

> The wolves of the title, three brothers who represent three Spanish institutions – the Church, the military and patriarchy – in the form of sexually predatory males, are allied against the incursions of Ana, the foreign governess who embodies both the threat of modernity and an active, non-Spanish, female sexuality.
>
> (Vernon and Eisen 2006, p. 50)

While the 'Ternario' theme from medieval play *El misterio de Elche*, and 'El dos de mayo', a patriotic *pasodoble* by nineteenth century *zarzuela* composer Federico Chueca, represent the Church and military respectively, Ana's theme is the contemporary romantic 'Our Song'. The dichotomy between the two sides Ana and the wolves represent emerges clearly through their music. These two sides stand for

the dualism between tradition, masculinity, Spanishness, and passive female sexuality on the one hand, and modernity, femininity, foreignness, and active female sexuality on the other. The way a 'different' musical piece and a female character seemingly offer a complex axis of identifications against the 'default' music playing in a male character's world seems to surface in other films whose music is discussed in writing about Spanish film music and can, I shall argue, offer a wider perspective for films like *Historias del Kronen* and *Krámpack*, where association between the dominant heteronormative[32] masculinity and rock songs in Spanish in the first, and between songs in English and threats to a nearly absent heteronormative masculinity in the second, hide a greater variety of potential identifications.

Gender divisions expressed through the music, I shall argue, can unearth other related divisions and add a further dimension to issues of national identity in film. In the introduction to *Gender in Spanish Cinema* (2004), editors Steven Marsh and Parvati Nair observe how gender theory can offer a fresh perspective on national cinemas:

> In the context of Spanish cinema, this is particularly apt. Not surprisingly, given the social and cultural relevance of gender, both during the dictatorship and in the more recent period of democracy, the construction of gender in Spanish cinema has been charged with ideological intent aimed at specific imaginations of national identities. Cinema has also been one of the most salient forms of Spanish cultural manifestation with consistently vibrant production and high box-office takings […] While Spanish cinema is incontrovertibly distinctive, the transnational borrowings of cinema as a fluid art form have produced important interventions in terms of how gender, and in turn nation, is imagined.
>
> (Marsh and Nair 2004, p. 4)

While scholarship about Spanish films has shifted towards including reflections on gender and collections like this have brought the nation into focus, few authors explore the way music relates to national identity via gender and fewer still discuss transnational musical borrowings. After looking at the examination of a movie where a foreign track is related to threats to patriarchal norms, I shall explore how songs'

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[32] The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines 'heteronormative' as 'denoting or relating to a world view that promotes heterosexuality as the normal or preferred sexual orientation' http://oxforddictionaries.com/view/entry/m_en_gb0993847#m_en_gb0993847.002 [Accessed 20 April 2011].

audiovisual placement can offer similar connections in three 1990s Spanish films, *Historias del Kronen*, *Barrio*, and *Krámpack*.

Jo Evans' chapter about popular love songs and compulsive nostalgia in Julio Medem's *La Ardilla Roja* (2002) describes the way Nat King Cole's 'Let There Be Love' and 'Elisa' share the aural space, articulating paths for opposed identifications. While 'Elisa', performed by male protagonist Jota and his now disappeared rock band Las Moscas, 'represents nostalgia as a negative addiction' (p. 158), 'Let There Be Love' accompanies several instances where a rejection of patriarchal moral standards is shown – a point which Evans does not highlight, but which emerges quite clearly through her description. Her final point about the piece, however, makes its negative connotation clear: 'Singing along with Nat King Cole is linked here to lying' (p. 155). Finally, her conclusions about 'Let There Be Love' and Felix, the character whose dangerous driving the piece counterpoints, offer interesting ideas for further thought about English-language songs in Spanish films:

> The differences between the songs and their cultural resonances reflect the power of mass media. This, perhaps, explains the ambiguous relationship between Felix and 'Let There Be Love'. The forces of Eros and Thanatos are given sound and body in this film respectively by the Cole song and the most nostalgic and violent of the lovers, and, even if the relationship between Felix and his theme tune is simply contrapuntal, it is still tempting to link the death-bringing Felix to the linguistic imperialism of Hollywood and MTV. […] Cole's song has not dated in the same way as 'Elisa', and the comparison emphasises the short shelf-life of regional rock music and longevity conferred by late-twentieth-century mass media
>
> (Evans 2002, p. 161)

The way Evans relates Cole's song to imperialism – linguistic as well as cultural – and describes its various occurrences in sequences where Spanish patriarchal society is subject to threats seems to track connections between these threads, audiovisually sketching Spanish traditional society's Other. While *La Ardilla Roja* (1993) would certainly deserve further investigation, examining Medem's film is outside the scope of this chapter. The way Evans discusses the audiovisual treatment of a song by a famous US performer creates a significant precedent for hearing the films I analyse differently.

Historias del Kronen

No hay sitio para ti

Montxo Armendáriz's adaptation of José Ángel Mañas' novel *Historias del Kronen* (1994) follows friends Carlos (Juan Diego Botto), Manolo (Armando del Río), Roberto (Jordi Mollà), Pedro (Aitor Merino), and Amalia (Núria Prims), through their nocturnal raids fuelled by sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll on the streets of Madrid, until Pedro's death by alcohol poisoning comes to shatter their world. Santiago Fouz-Hernández notes how the several songs mentioned in the novel and the bands on the soundtrack for the film offer two different views of cultural globalisation:

> The music in the novel is also predominantly English or American […] Nirvana, The Cure, The Doors, The The, Ramones, Elton John, Queen, Depeche Mode (although 1980s Spanish bands Siniestro Total, Burning and Parálisis Permanente are also mentioned). In the film, cultural globalization is even more obvious when we find that the soundtrack includes Spanish bands who sing in English (one of them even with the English name 'Australian Blonde', the other two with names in Spanish – Santa Fe and El Inquilino Comunista – perform songs in English with titles such as 'Dancing on my Brain', 'Mr Kinky Kong' or 'Oh, Mamma' and 'Charlotte says' respectively).
>
> (Fouz-Hernández 2000, p. 92)

While one could attribute the film's radically different choices to financial reasons (songs by established bands are notoriously expensive to license), the association between the Spanish bands singing in English and cultural globalisation can produce further reflections about which identifications the interaction between these songs, all the other songs in the film, and its other narrative aspects can offer. *Historias del Kronen* does not replace those bands whose inclusion would be excessively expensive showing posters or records instead of using their songs[33], but the coexistence of songs by Spanish bands in Spanish and songs by British and Spanish bands in English poses interesting questions about which music surrounds which character and how their songs construct their roles. I shall explore how songs in English and different gender roles interlace, opening paths for identifications where gender relates to other identities within the modern nation.

[33] See the parts about *Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo* and *Radiofreccia* in Chapter Four where I discuss instances where 'expensive' artists are shown and not heard.

Historias del Kronen opens on a panning audiovisual cityscape of Madrid at dusk, where the broad panoramic views are accompanied by 'close-up' soundscapes. A few establishing shots introduce the urban environment, panning unhurriedly to sonic snapshots featuring the sound of traffic, church bells, a pneumatic drill, a phone ringing, a siren, supermarket PA announcements, a plane landing, and train station PA announcements, until the establishing shots of Cervecería Kronen trigger the first taste of rock, which closely accompanies the visuals showing the bar. The music fades out on the brief cut to another nocturnal image of Madrid and gradually returns as Cervecería Kronen reappears, twice. The first source song we hear, 'Mr Funky Kong', is inside Kronen as we follow Carlos through its doors. This funk-rock tune by Spanish band Santa Fe keeps playing in the background while Carlos orders a Kronenbourg (after which, presumably, Kronen is named) and joins his friends Roberto, Silvia and Miguel – the one stable couple within the Kronen clique – and Pedro. The music changes to Lox's 'The Man I Hate' on the cut to the five friends doing lines of cocaine in Roberto's car and again on the cut to the club where 'Qué voy a hacer' (What am I going to do), by Spanish heavy metal legends Hamlet, is being blasted. But after Amalia rejects Carlos' courtship, the English lyrics and female vocals of Lox's 'Dancing On My Brain' follow Hamlet's front man's shouted vocal performance in Spanish. Later Carlos and the other guys are shown playing pool in a bar where Terrorvision's 'What the doctor ordered' is heard as Manolo eyes up some girls who are, however, instantly joined by their dates. The night continues without music, but the guys' last stop is a building site, where Manolo and Roberto point out how great playing there would sound and Carlos takes his chances walking on a suspended girder, showing off his courage.

The Kronen girls' and boys' first night-out establishes a few interesting audiovisual territorialisations and hierarchies. Fouz-Hernández notes how:

> Space, or rather, territories become a major ground for youth resistance in both novel and film. These territories are explicitly circumscribed by generational dynamics, dramatically played out in the film in particular by the pointed use of operational binaries: day/night, indoors/outside. In this context, Armendáriz's film unfolds most of the action either indoors (Carlos's and Amalia's family homes and the Kronen bar) or, when outdoors, mainly at night. One of the very few daylight scenes takes place in the swimming pool in Roberto's neighbourhood, still within the boundaries of his family's (shared) property. The contrast between day and night is made obvious to the

> point that when the screen is filled with daylight it almost hurts our eyes, since we as audience (like the characters in the film) are no longer used to it.
>
> (Fouz-Hernández 2000, p. 93)

Another operational binary through which territories are claimed appears to be music/absence of music. The parents' generation does not intrude on their progeny's space nor use music, while the young protagonist and his friends often enjoy the night accompanied by music or aurally conquering the surrounding space by playing their songs – a feature which emerges clearly through the way the first night out unfolds. Music comes and goes alongside the shots where Kronen appears – initially dramatic and later source – and fills Roberto's car, the club, the bar and, however briefly, the empty building site where Manolo and Roberto vocally reproduce their music. The night and the indoors are clearly the territory Carlos and friends inhabit visually, but the way the music marks their territory alongside their physical presence contributes to their selective appropriation of these territories, narrowing the space where the young *madrileños* can rebel endlessly – at least until their dream world falls apart after Pedro loses consciousness towards the end of the film, when the music immediately stops and is not heard again until the end credits. On other occasions prior to Pedro's death, disruptions occur at night/indoors locations without music – for example, Carlos's ejection from the convenience store happens at night indoors, but without music, which, I think, quickly establishes music as a third necessary condition alongside night/indoors for somewhere to be claimed as their territory. These divisions reinforce the connection between a circumscribed audiovisual space and the group's freedom to express their rebellion. The connection between music and their world clearly emerges earlier than that between night/indoors and their territory.

Trainspotting and *Twin Town* use music for a similar purpose, but, while their music separates opposed universes, *Historias del Kronen* draws inner borders among its world's inhabitants through subtler differences among its songs. These inner divisions are first charted through the initial night out. Carlos' relationships are passing fads, but Amalia, who has seemingly given him a few chances already, keeps him interested throughout the story. The first courtship attempt portrayed fails after a lengthy tête-à-tête at the club while everybody is head banging to Hamlet. Amalia rejects him as a significant musical shift happens, where the English lyrics performed

by a female singer of Santa Fe's 'Dancing on my brain' replace the Spanish lyrics performed by a male singer of Hamlet's 'Qué voy a hacer'. Other songs in English – a few of which are performed by a female singer – occur again later while Amalia or other women disrupt Carlos and the other 'macho' men's quest for sex and rebellion against the rules, as well as their homosocial bonds. Terrorvision's 'What the doctor ordered' accompanies Carlos as he leans on a stranger as if to kiss her and brazenly asks whether she was waiting for him, and keeps playing while Carlos and Manolo's short-lived hopes about two girls who are returning their looks, talking, and smiling are shattered after two young men join them. Later, Australian Blonde's 'September Song' is playing in Kronen as Carlos finds out Amalia has asked about him and tests Roberto's patience when he asks to borrow his car so he can drive her home. At the movie theatre where the three watch Carlos's favourite movie, *Henry, Portrait of a Serial Killer* (1986), Carlos takes Amalia's hand, unceremoniously presses it on his groin, and insists after her initial reticence – all the while Roberto, sitting to Carlos's right, watches resentfully. The scene clearly shows her hesitations and the way Roberto feels about Amalia coming between him and Carlos while the soundtrack for *Henry, Portrait of a Serial Killer* lends the scene a short appearance of Kid Tater and The Cheaters' 'Too Young for These Blues'. Inquilino Comunista's 'Charlotte Says' plays in the club where Amalia and Carlos are kissing and are interrupted by Roberto, who was jealously observing the scene. Shortly after, Terrorvision's 'Some People Say' plays in the club where Amalia and Carlos are kissing while playing pool with Pedro and Roberto, who stand there waiting and staring, visibly annoyed. Later Australian Blonde's 'Chup Chup', yet another song with English lyrics, is playing in the club where Carlos, Amalia, and Roberto are dancing – a scene interestingly portrayed through a medium shot zooming in on the happy couple, leaving Roberto out. Another of Australian Blonde's songs, 'Precious Love', accompanies the scene where Roberto talks to Carlos about friendship, raising questions about their own, which Carlos swiftly hijacks, answering that friendship is for the weak.

Towards the end, the 'Precious Love' scene marks the beginning of the end for Carlos and his relationships. Immediately after leaving Roberto high and dry, Carlos finds out about his grandfather's death – which exposes his needs, ironically, right after his earlier comment about friendship – and the bubble bursts. After the

funeral Amalia finally rejects him. Later, Inquilino Comunista's 'Brain Colapse' (*sic*) is playing in Kronen while Carlos, after an unsuccessful attempt to chat up a barmaid, starts preparing a joint at the bar. She tells him 'aquí no' (not here), Carlos continues, and the owner kicks him out. The scene follows a quarrel among the friends about their differing views – another event pushing Carlos towards his decline. After the Kronen brawl Carlos tries kissing his own sister, Amalia hangs up on him, and Carlos's mother dismisses the housekeeper, who was blamed for some cash that went missing in their house – for which Carlos is responsible. The final act – Pedro's death – opens with Santa Fe's 'Oh Mama', a mellow acoustic ballad sung in English by a female performer, playing in Pedro's house as everybody arrives to celebrate. After a while Roberto decides to 'cambiar esa música de mierda' (change this shitty music) and plays 'Texas Cowboys', an electronica dance piece by British duo The Grid, to which everybody keeps dancing convulsively until the music changes to 'Jartos d'Aguantar' by Spanish punk rock band Reincidentes. Carlos sings along, pushing Pedro to dance, and follows Roberto outside where Silvia and Miguel are having sex somewhere hidden behind the bushes. After staring for a short while, Carlos starts rubbing Roberto's erect penis through his clothes, pulls his jeans off and masturbates him, but angrily rejects his ensuing attempt to kiss, telling him off because kissing 'es de culandrones' (is for faggots). Right after Carlos undresses Roberto, the music changes again to Lox's 'The Man I Hate', which stays through Carlos and Roberto's few moments alone and accompanies Pedro's death by alcohol poisoning after Carlos force feeds him whiskey despite knowing about his medical condition – Pedro has diabetes and has had one kidney removed. After Pedro loses consciousness the music stops, Carlos's inept reanimation attempt fails, Pedro is taken to A&E, and the doctors finally pronounce him dead.

The association between 'troublesome' girls and the songs in English, which clearly emerges through several of these sequences, bears further consideration. Towards the end – and a few times earlier – the songs in English accompany different situations where women do not feature prominently and are not pushing the narrative forward. I shall discuss these occurrences later. First, a few reflections about how women are portrayed in *Historias del Kronen*. Fouz-Hernández discusses the Kronen crowd's socio-political context extensively and, precisely regarding the roles women start playing through the 1990s, notes how:

> the incorporation of women into the Spanish job market … has no doubt affected the previously unchallenged overconfidence of Spanish men … This major transformation of Spanish society could be perceived by some young men as a further social challenge to their confidence and also add to the feeling of fear and uncertainty […] This sense of a lack or loss, of a de-centred, dislocated male youth culture pervades *Historias del Kronen*.
>
> (Fouz-Hernández 2000, p. 85)

While women's working lives do not feature prominently (Amalia studies and Carlos's mother's working commitments are implied – she has a housekeeper – but never mentioned), there are a few women who challenge Carlos's arrogance and dislocate the macho culture the Kronen men share. The sequences showing moments where a woman threatens their supremacy and homosociality, for example Amalia rejecting Carlos and coming between him and Roberto, feature songs in English, which, I argue, contributes to the establishment of a gender divide that visuals and dialogues alone do not evoke quite as effectively. A close examination of the musical materials the film makes available shows how the aural partition between heteronormative masculinity and its Others (disruptive females and homosexual males) reveals a map where songs point towards paths for identifications beyond gender. Songs alone can bring a certain connotation along, but the way links are established between songs and a certain character, narrative event, place or space, gives songs a further connotative baggage. Australian Blonde songs can evoke 1990s Spanish youth through their pre-cinematic meaning. However, the association the narrative establishes between these songs and every character who threatens heteronormative masculinity gives the songs a further connotation. Where one would place these songs in the national cultural landscape can influence the way one perceives the culture those threatening patriarchal norms represent inside or outside the national cultural landscape. Songs, I would argue, can 'play' non-place-bound differences on a place-bound culture, producing ideas about where and how these differences stand vis-à-vis the place-bound culture.

Fouz-Hernández talks about how women's new roles are challenging Spanish men's certainties about women's traditional place in their world – a feature which clearly emerges in those sequences where songs in English accompany the women who disrupt Carlos's otherwise uninterrupted amusement, and interfere in the

relationships between the Kronen men. Vernon and Eisen's description of several representations of masculine symbols of traditional Spanish culture and of their feminine Other in Saura, and Evans' reflections about Nat King Cole's 'Let There Be Love' (also associated with threats to patriarchy) and its links to linguistic imperialism in Medem's *La Ardilla Roja* are all variations on the theme of contemporary (and often globalising) popular culture as threatening for the authentic (and often autochthonous) traditional culture. In *After the Great Divide* (1986), Andreas Huyssen discusses the association between woman and mass culture extensively, elaborating ideas about the selective process of feminisation of certain kinds of popular culture in the late 19th and early 20th century which can provide interesting parallels for the examination of gender divisions' broader implications in *Historias del Kronen*. Huyssen notes how 'Time and again documents from the late 19th century ascribe pejorative feminine characteristics to mass culture […] not, however, working-class culture or residual forms of older popular or folk cultures' (p. 49) and later continues:

> The fact that the identification of woman with mass has major political implications is easily recognized. […] In the late 19th century, a specific traditional male image of woman served as a receptacle for all kinds of projections, displaced fears, and anxieties (both personal and political), which were brought about by modernization and the new social conflicts, as well as by specific historical events […] The fear of the masses in this age of declining liberalism is always also a fear of woman, a fear of nature out of control, a fear of the unconscious, of sexuality, of the loss of identity and stable ego boundaries in the mass.
>
> (Huyssen 1986, p. 52)

The Saura films Vernon and Eisen discuss in their chapter where contemporary music is related to women (and sometimes madness) construct their threatening objects through non-traditional music, and Medem's *La Ardilla Roja*, as Evans's conclusions suggest, establishes connections between popular music and whoever threatens the patriarchal order. All these films' musical articulations of different threats could be described as symbols of mass culture. The several instances where the association between musical expressions of globalising mass culture and threats against patriarchal norms emerges point towards a recurrent audiovisual trope where different musical texts and diverging stances vis-à-vis the dominant culture combine,

forming audiovisual characterisations of conflictive attitudes towards the dominant culture.

Another significant peril emerges every now and again: foreignness – quite often accompanied by foreign popular music or at least Spanish popular music that is heavily permeated by foreign (predominantly Anglophone) stylistic influence. In the film every foreign character mentioned (usually women) and all foreign music carry the evils Huyssen describes. The globalising popular culture that flooded Spain after Franco becomes another enemy for traditional Spanish culture alongside the other known threats, and the current socio-political context Fouz-Hernández describes is a fertile terrain for the changes endangering the heteronormative Kronen males. The globalising popular music that pervades the film and the troublesome girls are as threatening to the boys' version of traditional Spain – disguised under clichéd youth rebellion – as mass culture is to modernism according to Huyssen. On the surface, the Kronen males and tradition – let alone modernism – may not share a lot, but below their confrontational stances towards the adult world and the establishment bubbles a blend of quite 'traditional' ideas about masculinity where misogyny and homophobia are still intensely present. Their beliefs are 'traditional' and, while their music would never be defined as 'traditional', the connection between Spanish-language hard rock and Carlos's entourage creates a clear association between those songs and his clique. Furthermore, their general behaviour – including a few anti-EU and remarks – and their music – featuring several 'classic' Spanish rock anthems – certainly feels 'traditional' in the audiovisual economy of the movie, where music exclusively belongs to youth, and all those who challenge Carlos's entourage and their ideas are defined through different music. Music effectively establishes the girls as threatening, accomplishing a feminisation of songs in English, which is exploited to 'devalue' the boys who do not fit the macho stereotype, whereas the Spanish-language rock draws out the boys' conformist views, undermining their defiant image.

While the songs surrounding the 'troublesome' girls all share English lyrics – whether performed by British or Spanish bands – the other songs, despite being in Spanish, are still obviously the product of Anglo American popular music's influence on Spanish bands like Tribu X, Reincidentes, Hamlet, Estragos, and indeed Manolo and Roberto's own act, M.C.D., who feature twice, first rehearsing and later

performing for a large moshing crowd. Carlos and his friends are regularly accompanied by a variety of rock songs, but the association between the English songs and the girls is not exclusive. Pedro and Roberto negotiate interesting attitudes towards these songs, and their sexuality – which Carlos often mockingly questions – becomes defined through their positions vis-à-vis these musical symbols of heteronormative masculinity's Other. Pedro, whose medical condition does not allow for the lifestyle everybody (including the girls) pursues, takes drugs but does not drink alcohol, which becomes the topic for a few conversations among his friends, who often mention his teetotalism alongside the righteous behaviour of other friends. Carlos often jokes about Pedro's alleged homosexuality, touches his bum, calls him *marica*, etc. Pedro is not undisturbed by these remarks, often getting annoyed at Carlos's insistent provocative behaviour, but his allegations are often aurally supported by Pedro's affiliation to songs constructed as feminised.

The music playing at Pedro's parents' house at the beginning of the party (an acoustic ballad sung by Santa Fe's female vocalist in English, not exactly hard rock) is shortly after dismissed as 'shitty music' by Roberto – interestingly, I would add, since Roberto's ambivalence towards his homosexuality emerges through a combination of musical and other choices. However, when Pedro is involved in a fight with another youth who keeps teasing him while Tribu X's 'No Los Acorrales' is playing, Carlos defends him, but tells him 'tienes que ser fuerte, joder, sino te comen' (you've got to be strong, fuck, or else they'll eat you alive) and accepts the motorway bridge endurance contest pictured in the film posters on his behalf.[34] The masculine music and Carlos are pressuring Pedro to prove he is a real man.

While Pedro's alleged homosexuality remains unconfirmed, Roberto's homosexual desires are clearly portrayed and his crush on Carlos is no mystery. The first Kronen scene shows Roberto fending off Carlos as he provocatively touches him and resentfully enquiring about his current girlfriend Nuria – the first woman who comes between the two friends – while Santa Fe's 'Mr. Funky Kong' is playing. The first song in English accompanies a display of Roberto's emotional vulnerability and the first mention of a woman who later comes between the two friends. Carlos is

[34] Instead of continuing their fistfight at Kronen, Pedro and the other guy step over the guardrail of a nearby bridge and, holding the edge with their hands, lower themselves down, hang over the motorway, and try to outlast one another without falling off. Everybody gathers to watch, until policemen drive by, disrupting the contest and dispersing the crowd.

often launching himself in or instigating dangerous if spectacular feats, like walking on a suspended girder in a building site while drunk or pushing Roberto to do 'el suicida', which entails driving against the traffic through a tunnel in the morning rush hour after a night out. These are masculinity-affirming parades for Carlos, but not exactly for Roberto. While Roberto usually seconds Carlos's every whim, his obedience hides more than just an attempt to impress Carlos. Through his participation Roberto obeys the heteronormative macho ideologies whereby courage and rebellion equal being a real man – like Pedro does earlier. But Roberto joins the macho culture musically, too. He plays drums in a group known as M.C.D. – the acronym for 'Me Cago en Dios' (I curse god) – whose songs 'No Hay Sitio para Ti' (There's no room for you) and 'Cargados de Alcohol' (Loaded with alcohol) explore exclusion and clichéd youth rebellion, and calls the music playing at Pedro's house 'shitty', promptly replacing it with something quite different not only from the preceding piece, but also from those Spanish rock anthems heard earlier.

Roberto's token affirmation of a culture he feels he ought to subscribe to – whether he belongs to it or not – is often counterbalanced by a relapse towards letting himself go. After doing 'el suicida', pressured by Carlos's insistent provocation 'ves como eres un puto marica' (see, you're a fucking faggot), Roberto is praised by Carlos in front of everybody at Kronen – a reassurance for his traditional masculinity and for his concern about Carlos's opinion, but the night ends on the road where transgender prostitutes flock, after Roberto convinces Carlos to go along for a round of oral sex each. Carlos appears reluctant, and later rejects Roberto's friendship while another Australian Blonde song, ironically entitled 'Precious Love', is playing in Kronen, as if to emphasise Roberto's frailty because he needs Carlos's friendship. Later, at Pedro's party, the furtive and intense close encounter between Carlos and Roberto outside the house happens right after the end of the Reincidentes' 'Jartos d'Aguantar' and the beginning of Lox's 'The Man I Hate' – a final song in English playing while Roberto's homoerotic desire is fleetingly requited by Carlos who, however, rejects Roberto's affection immediately after. Roberto's behaviour, I would argue, often offsets his homosexuality, which Carlos – and therefore Roberto, too – deems inappropriate and offensive. Carlos teasing Roberto and Pedro, and his brief – and often calculatingly cruel – sorties towards gay sex are paradoxically fitting for a character whose vicious behaviour and inclination towards transgression are his

trademark. But Roberto keeps alternating between accepting and denying his homosexuality, and the music surrounding these moments becomes a means for the endless negotiation of his sexuality in a heteronormative culture where noncompliance demands redemption. The music Roberto plays clashes against the ambient songs heard where his homosexuality emerges and, I argue, carries out the aural redemption for his capital sin against the prevailing culture.

While all the identities I outline above are largely defined through gender, the paths these can offer are wider. Via the gendering constructed around different attitudes towards the dominant culture (musical and otherwise) inside and outside the film's narrative world, these audiovisual characterisations evoke different nuances of Spanish culture in the 1990s. On the one hand, Carlos's behaviour bears the signs of a recent past where women had subordinate roles and homosexuality was illegal – which, perhaps, could partially explain his extreme reactions ranging between momentary curiosity and violent disgust towards Roberto's sexuality. On the other hand, there are few women who disrupt Carlos's existence (for example Amalia who often does not let him win and finally rejects him, but still capitulates every now and again) and one gay man who never fully accepts his homosexuality and obeys the rules – through his general behaviour and musically. The music 'plays' the world Carlos and the other alpha males inhabit and its Other apart, marking the sequences where Amalia and the men who do not fit the macho man mould are doing something against its rules, rebelling against Carlos's reactionary brand of clichéd rebellion, or just letting themselves be themselves without attempting to please Carlos. But finally those who are different are removed and their music is not heard anymore. Amalia exits after hanging up on Carlos, Pedro's death follows, and Roberto behaves against his beliefs and restrains Carlos, who quite strangely – and perhaps mockingly – wants to do the right thing and hand the tape containing evidence of their involvement in Pedro's death to the police. Songs 'play' divisions among the Kronen crowd, opening paths for wider identifications that outgrow the small cinematic world Carlos and his friends inhabit – a phenomenon that, unfortunately, often remains unheard in writing about Spanish film music. The music heard through the end credits seems to confirm Carlos and his macho peers prevail, reiterating the now sarcastic words 'No Hay Sitio Para Ti' from Roberto's band's song, again and again until the end. For those who do not fit Carlos's world there really is no room, a final

message that, as I hope to have demonstrated here, music greatly contributes to conveying.

Barrio

Canción Prohibida

Fernando Léon de Aranoa's breakthrough feature shows a radically different Madrid, where the streets Carlos and the other protagonists of *Historias del Kronen* were roaming in their summer of sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll seem as distant as a mirage in the heat of the concrete jungle where Javi (Timy Benito), Manu (Eloi Yebra), and Rai (Críspulo Cabezas) spend their aimless inert summer months. The three boys live in high-rise housing projects on the outskirts of the Spanish capital, where despite the impending summer holidays nothing changes for Javi, Manu, and Rai, who can only dream of getting away from their neighbourhood:

> Porque en su barrio querer no es poder. Porque allí al que madruga no le ayuda nadie, tan sólo llega antes a la cola del paro. Porque allí no hay carteles indicando las salidas, a veces ni siquiera hay salidas
> (Because in their neighbourhood where there is a will there is no way. Because there nobody helps the one who gets up early, he just gets to the dole queue earlier. Because there, there are no signs to indicate the exit, sometimes there is not even an exit.)
>
> (Léon de Aranoa in Cueto 1998, p. 160).

The words of *Barrio*'s director convey quite poignantly the feeling of claustrophobia constantly present in the cultural dimension as well as in the neighbourhood where the three young protagonists spend month after month, coming to terms with the awareness that they cannot escape. His anaphor echoes other repetitions present in the film through words hinting at repetition, like those in the lyrics of that song by Hechos Contra el Decoro that accompany the recurring shots showing the three friends on the metro, seemingly going somewhere, in reality going nowhere.

These short metro sequences come back, as do news reports, which, as Nuria Cruz-Cámara aptly summarises in the conclusion for her discussion about TV news reports in *Barrio*, 'se configuran como un simulacro contrapuntístico que transcurre

paralelo – y ajeno – a las vidas de esa gente' ('are configured as a counterpuntal simulacrum that flows parallel – and alien – to the lives of those people') (2005, p. 67). Cruz-Cámara continues:

> Léon de Aranoa logra sacar a los tres chicos y sus familias de la invisibilidad social en la que viven para mostrar, como dice una de las canciones, que, aunque 'nos miran como fantasmas, late un corazón que imagina, que destila frustración en cada esquina.
> (Léon de Aranoa manages to remove the three boys and their families from the social invisibility in which they live to show that, like one of the songs says, although 'they look at us like ghosts, a heart beats that imagines, that distils the frustration at every corner)
>
> (Cruz-Cámara 2005, p. 67)

The article gives a compelling, insightful reading of a poignantly dramatic cinematic account of a world where 'us' and 'them' remain at safe distance, allowing 'us' to gaze at 'them', but never the other way.

Cruz-Cámara's argument revolves around Baudrillardian concepts of simulacrum, implosion and hyperreality,[35] which she fruitfully applies to *Barrio* and finally critiques for their inadequacy where non-consumers negotiate simulacra. The three boys are constantly longing for simulacra of another world, the world where summers are spent on the beach and beautiful *mulatas* are plentiful and available – a world Javi, Manu, and Rai have seen on TV, heard about, invoked through its music, but whose experience through a simulacrum has effects which Baudrillard's conceptualisation had not accounted for. She notes how:

> Aunque habitantes de la sociedad mediática, en su caso el simulacro no provoca la implosión de lo real en lo hiperreal, sino que subraya con patetismo y una buena dosis de humor la privación que los chicos sufren en sus vidas, a la vez que afirma irónicamente la inutilidad de la simulación para satisfacer sus ansias de 'coger, agarrar fuerte'[36]

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[35] For Baudrillard '[t]he present […] is an era marked by the ascendancy of modes of signification, which have in effect obliterated any meanings that might once have been attributed to such notions as objectivity, reference and truth. In the contemporary world signs bear no relation to 'reality' (that is, a mind-independent reality […]) in any shape or form. Indeed, the sign is now to be regarded as nothing more than a simulacrum of itself, i.e. signs refer only to other signs, not to any reality external to representation. What Baudrillard means by this is that we do not possess any criteria by which to distinguish between appearance and reality.' (Sedgwick 2002, p. 22). The simulacrum does not signify, represent reality, but instead, through its 'implosion', becomes a replacement for reality which Baudrillard calls 'hyperreality' (2001).

[36] Léon de Aranoa quoted in Cueto 1998, p. 160.

> (Although inhabitants of a media society, in their case the simulacrum doesn't provoke the implosion of the real into the hyperreal, but underlines with pathos and a good dose of humour the deprivation the boys suffer in their lives, at the same time as it ironically affirms the uselessness of simulation to satisfy their yearning to 'grab, hold tight')
>
> (Cruz-Cámara 2005, p. 62)

The simulacra Cruz-Cámara addresses are all visual – the jet ski Rai wins through a prize draw organised by a brand of yoghurt; the cardboard cut-out *mulata* the three friends see in a travel agency's window and later steal alongside other Caribbean-evoking props; the TV screens through which the news from another world reach their homes, sometimes provoking reactions, sometimes going unnoticed. The article discusses the way every now and again songs reiterate a motif otherwise present in the film. For example, the sensation of confinement the film conveys through certain shots where the songs' lyrical content heightens the pointlessness of their circular journeys outside the neighbourhood – despite the hopeful connotation a journey can offer (p. 60) – and the idea that the simulacra projected through the TV hide the reality of the neighbourhood, which are emphasised or enlarged by a song – again chiefly through words undermining the authority of TV information (p. 65). However, songs are never discussed as the aural simulacra of those unreachable paradises Javi, Manu, and Rai dream of – despite the obvious connections between several songs featuring in the movie and the locations the three teenagers yearn for. Furthermore, the way the three friends use essentialised ideas about these locations and their inhabitants remains equally unproblematised.

The concept of 'tropicalisations' Frances R. Aparicio and Susana Chávez-Silverman (1997) propose in their eponymous edited collection can allow for different interpretations of *Barrio*. Aparicio and Chávez-Silverman connect 'tropicalism' and its etymological origin, Said's 'orientalism' (1978), and define the former vis-à-vis the Latino context as 'the system of ideological fictions (Said 321) with which the dominant (Anglo and European) cultures trope Latin American and U.S. Latino/a identities and cultures' (p. 1). While their account theorises 'tropicalisations' in the plural precisely as a challenge against the unidirectionality Said implies in order to introduce the perspective of the colonised, a two-way dynamic never becomes available to Javi, Manu, and Rai. Despite their being objects of a system of ideological fictions with which the dominant culture tropes, and

essentialises their world, their attempt to evade their dominated positions and inhabit the dominant culture's perspective, I will argue, removes all possibilities for a two-way process. I therefore use 'tropicalisation' in the singular, purposely retaining the unidirectionality Said's 'orientalism' conveys.

The film features many songs by Latin American artists, including Celina González, Lalo Rodríguez, and José Manzo Perroni. Their songs' audiovisual positioning in the film world seems to present their music as a simulacrum of the beaches and tropical paradises the three friends attempt to evoke through the above mentioned objects. Interestingly, a handful of Spanish bands whose music shows a variety of Latin American influences feature on the soundtrack, which, as I will discuss, further nuances the identifications offered in the film. The other musical idiom several songs share and reformulate in a range of fusions with other elements is hip hop, a genre whose notorious connotations quickly evoke harsh urban ghettos on the margins of society. The hip hop sound these songs share invokes the non-white communities where hip hop has spread as a lingua franca for the expression of oppression, initially among African-Americans. However, the racial connotations hip hop brings to Fernando Léon de Aranoa's barrio are not simple. After success broadened its reach, hip hop was adopted among other non-white minorities (exemplified by Mexican-American hip hop duo Tha Mexakinz whose bilingual piece 'Confessions' appears on *Barrio*'s soundtrack) and quite a few socially conscious young bands in the peripheries of urban areas worldwide, who often combine hip hop and recognisable musical elements from those problem areas and countries for which their songs express empathy and support (exemplified by Hechos Contra El Decoro, whose musically *mestizo* songs pervade the film). Writing about hip hop, Halifu Osumare calls these 'connective marginalities, [that is] social resonances between black expressive culture within its contextual political history and similar dynamics in other nations' (2001, p. 171). While similar 'connective marginalities could potentially surface between other close groupings in the film world and invoked through the songs, I will consider how these connections are sometimes narratively damaged.

Another musical idiom appears several times through different forms. A few rock songs, including one rap-metal crossover piece, feature towards the end and earlier rock influences are heard in the songs written by Hechos Contra el Decoro for

the film. Finally, there are two different techno pieces by English dance act Steve Everitt which – quite predictably – accompany the pusher who offers Rai a job and a night out which Rai funds using his illegal money. One thing the Latin American and hip hop influences that pervade *Barrio*'s soundtrack share is their connection to a faraway place the three boys have no direct access to, imaginary locations which they believe to be exactly like those simulacra of tourist catalogue Caribbean islands where beautiful women are plentiful and available, and music video 'gangsta paradises' where naked girls hang out poolside and a barrio kid like them can get away with dealing drugs.

The universes these two musical idioms invoke and Fernando Léon de Aranoa's *Barrio* also have some resemblances. Poverty and isolation, a sense of being trapped in their harsh realities, a million miles away from those glittering representations of their façades, which are quite obviously all the three boys see of Latin America and non-white ghettos through the Anglophone North America where hip hop originated. And perhaps the Latin American immigrant woman Manu often furtively gazes at, first at the playground and later in a dark flat where he is meant to deliver a pizza, had migrated to Spain expecting something different, maybe something similar to the place Javi, Manu, and Rai are too excluded from, the Spain whose sunny beaches feature obsessively in the omnipresent news reports on the TVs in the neighbourhood's homes. But while the locations Latin American vibes and hip hop evoke for the three friends are idealised and generally yearned for, the one North African piece, Cheb Mami's 'Douha Alia', accompanies their close encounter with that often demonised place whose existence was constructed through tales someone had heard but could not vouch for: the ghost station. Built up as a place one can see but not live to tell stories about, the abandoned metro station turns out to be a crowded hideout for African immigrants through which the three boys walk undisturbed, but not without feeling the Otherness of a world below their own, which, I will argue, the music contributes to producing. The underground immigrant den constitutes a different, fascinating Other, one the boys finally see for what it actually is, debunking myths about its overblown dangers, but one Javi, Manu, and Rai never yearn for, even prior to their strange discovery. Every connotation these songs bring into the world the three boys inhabit can offer paths towards different identifications. In the following pages I shall discuss how *Barrio*'s songs play a

paramount role in making different possibilities available depending on which connotation is heard.

The lengthy opening sequence runs to a collage of instrumental parts of 'La Llave de Mi Corazón' by Hechos Contra el Decoro. While this is quite clearly dramatic music the visuals suggest the presence of a variety of musical cultures in the film world, hinting at both Latin American music and hip hop by showing a guy carrying an enormous ghetto blaster on his shoulder and a *gitano* playing a trumpet on the railway track. The cue aptly introduces the variety of idioms that will feature throughout the film as the amateurish montage featuring different corners of the neighbourhood unfolds, showing a diverse human landscape through a hand-held shakiness and quivering focus which might imply we are gazing at the film world through the eyes of one of its inhabitants. The opening montage sequence shows all kinds of *barrio* people, from teenage boys to gangs, from beggars to housewives, from kids playing football to junkies, from skaters to prostitutes, while the music quickly develops from its brief oriental intro into rhythms reminiscent of reggaeton to which mariachi trumpets are added shortly after the start. The hip hop element is first heard as the piece starts over on the cut between Rai finishing his lunch and Manu sitting on a bench in the playground where Javi and Rai are about to join him, at which point Hechos Contra el Decoro's singer starts delivering lines about longing for a loved someone in a distinctively hip hop style. While the first occurrence of 'La Llave de mi Corazón' on the establishing montage seems to provide a general introduction through music and visuals, the second occurrence allows for a closer glance at the *barrio* as the three boys experience it.

The opening lines punctuate their curiosity for women as a shot reverse shot reveals Manu staring at a *mulata* talking to another *mulata* on a bench as white children are playing on the ground nearby. This scene represents the first occurrence where a *mulata* in the film world and music containing Latin American references on the soundtrack cross paths. Its lyrical relevance can reinforce the tie between music and the objects of the boys' desires introduced in the previous sequence. After the last echo of trumpet fades on the cut between the initial establishing montage and the three boys staring at the travel agency's window, the young protagonists are introduced through their conversation about holiday destinations and *mulatas*' virtues. Javi, Manu, and Rai speculate about locations and women they have just

experienced through simulacra (the holiday details, the few photographs of faraway beaches, the cardboard cut-out *mulata* wearing a skimpy bikini in the Sol y Mar Viajes window) and Rai's brother's stories about his holiday in the Carribean where he claimed he had sex on the beach with a beautiful *mulata*.

The first scene after the opening immediately reveals their longing for a place Javi, Manu and Rai only know through the simulacra planted in the wasteland of their scorching neighbourhood like mirages in the desert. Their curiosity regards faraway lands and idealised non-white females, summer holidays on the beach and sex, and encompasses all that is Other and unavailable to a fifteen year old who lives on the wrong side of the tracks. Their conversations overtly construct these ideas about the unknown, desired Other as tropicalised. The association between songs featuring a Latin American musical idiom and the three friends' longing for the Other and the unreachable bears further consideration. There seems to be a pattern whereby these songs occur where the Other and the unreachable get a bit closer and where the boys attempt to reach their escapist dreams, sometimes facilitated through the music playing in the film world. After the instrumental version of 'La Llave de Mi Corazón' is heard as the opening shots establish the story's setting, the piece returns, for the first time in the full version including the vocal parts, as Manu finds himself a stone's throw from a *mulata*, just like those he and his friends often fantasise and speculate about – as seen in the previous sequence. Shortly after, a brief snippet of the piece returns as the three friends crowd a small phone booth strangely located in the middle of a weed-infested concrete wasteland to call a hotline and speak to a woman named Samantha whose ad they found on the newspaper.

One day Rai goes over to Javi's house and finds Susana (Marieta Orozco), his older sister, dancing to 'Devórame Otra Vez', a salsa piece by Puertorrican musician Lalo Rodríguez. Susana carries on dancing after Rai has noticed her and entered her bedroom, and while she moves confidently to a piece about unfulfilled sexual desire and looks him right in the eye all he does is awkwardly stand in the doorway staring at her. The way 'Devórame Otra Vez' is used here is interesting in its own right – a Latin American song with explicit lyrics played by a young woman dancing in front of a younger boy – but for now I will discuss its positioning in the overall musical economy of the film and leave further remarks about the parallelism between tropicalisation and females for later.

The first song by a Latin American act accompanies another scene where one of the boys gets close to a woman who, despite being white, seems to acquire a certain tropical charm through the music she chooses for her bedroom dancing routine. Earlier we learn about Susana going topless at the local pool, just like those girls they show on the omnipresent news reports about holiday-makers on the coast. Susana here embodies more than sexualised femininity, because the musical and lifestyle choices she makes establish a clear association between her character and the unreachable locations the boys also yearn for, thus turning Susana's actions into some kind of imitation of those simulacra brought to them via the images and sounds around them. Later Susana's simulation of life as seen on TV or heard on the radio is invalidated by harsh reality where her parents get separated and again towards the end where her brother and his friends see her exiting a car where she was performing oral sex on a man – supposedly for money. These reality bites replace and progressively erase the hopefulness of those earlier moments where Susana was dancing for Rai to a song from another place, perhaps dreaming of a Caribbean paradise, perhaps of sex, passion, romance – all fantasies catalysed via the music, which pulls their minds towards the unknown paradises those words and music evoke, but whose referents, as the movie progressively reveals, are unreachable for Susana, her brother and his two friends.

Like mirages, these simulacra start revealing their emptiness and disappear as we begin to realise not only that they do not exist for Susana, Javi, Manu, and Rai, but also that that same reality they believe the travel agency window, the news, and the songs represent might not exist for anybody. Susana and Javi watch their parents getting separated and later Susana experiences sex as a night job in the back of a car. Towards the end Manu finds out his brother Rafa is a junky and not the happy man who triumphed, working his way out of there – a simulacrum his dad keeps cultivating through the whole story. Earlier, Manu's enchantment for the *mulata* from the playground scene is irreparably shattered, after he furtively gazes at her naked body while she is getting dressed in the bathroom of a house where he is meant to deliver a pizza to a rather ugly old man, who opens the door in a robe – a situation that implies she, like Susana, prostitutes herself. Furthermore, she, like many other men and women in the neighbourhood, obviously comes from another country, perhaps somewhere the boys saw a picture of in the travel agency's window,

which could suggest those are nothing but illusionary paper paradises whose sunny image often hides other harsh realities that make people like the unknown *mulata* want to escape from them. All these secondary plots and allusions suggest the lack of tangible referents for the mirages the Latin American songs and the travel agency window projected. About halfway through the film, Latin American songs disappear alongside the mirages and the escapist fantasies these songs often fuelled, as the hip hop (now without any Latin American vibes) and rock songs accompany sequences where the truth becomes obvious. Rock and hip hop replace Latin American music as reality effaces mirages and fantasies. *Barrio* shows a startlingly close audiovisual correlation between Latin American songs and escapist sequences, on the one hand, and the urban rhythms of hip hop and rock, and inescapable reality, on the other, which I will discuss and exemplify further later. But now I would like to reflect about Latin American music and the complex and diverse directions those songs can suggest.

In her essay about world music in coffee shops and retail stores, Anahid Kassabian (2004) addresses questions regarding how listeners are located in the world by world music, putting forward interesting reflections about those listening practices she terms 'distributed tourism'. Built on ideas of distributed subjectivity[37] she discusses elsewhere, the concept she calls distributed tourism expresses 'the presence of a network, many places at once.' And she continues: 'Sitting in my office, listening to Putumayo CDs, I am a distributed tourist. I move from space to space without changing places.' (p. 218) While Kassabian applies these ideas about listening to what she terms ubiquitous musics – which include music heard in coffee shops and retail stores among other practices – the concept, I think, can offer a new perspective on source songs and the possibilities for identifications available in the film.

Source songs in *Barrio* are always the object of a kind of listening seemingly quite different from that inattentive listening Kassabian assumes to prevail where

[37] Kassabian chooses to call subjectivity 'distributed' to apply the concept of distributed computing to listening practices. 'Desktop computing takes the computer as a discrete entity, like the Enlightenment subject; it relies solely on the processing power contained in the desktop unit. Distributed computing, however, links smaller units together so that they can share processing power in a pool of sorts. … Each computer, then, is a dense node in a network, neither discrete nor flattened. Such a perspective on computing power offers a powerful model for subjectivity; each subject is a dense node in an enormous network that is addressed by various participants in various ways and with varying degrees of power' (2004, p. 213).

ubiquitous musics are present, but her remarks about the differences between modern and postmodern musical tourism offer a few interesting parallels between these practices and the way songs are presented in the film. On the former, using the international collection *101 Strings Presents the Love Songs of Italy* as example, she notes how:

> The basic idea seems to have been to create a sense of another place, even if only in fantasy for the moment. One turned one's home into someplace like Italy, for a brief moment, through the confluence of cuisine, place setting, and music. […] One's attention, in this fantasy, was not split between Italy and one's living room; rather, one's speakers, etc., brought Italy to mind, evoked it, suggested it. Such recordings operate this way at least in part because their basic musical structures – from instrumentation to harmonic language to recording technologies – are local and familiar.
>
> (Kassabian 2004, pp. 218-9)

The way Susana plays (with) 'Devórame Otra Vez' and Kassabian's description of modern musical tourism share several details. Susana creates a fantasy – whether of another place or Other, perhaps adult, lives – using music, which can evoke another place through its genre characteristics (however imprecise one's detection of salsa could be, I believe 'Devórame Otra Vez' would at least sound foreign, perhaps generically Latin American, but certainly not Spanish) and, at the same time, the experiences the vocal performance conveys. However, Susana is not only listening to 'Devórame Otra Vez', but also dancing to it, and her dance, again, can evoke another place through its distinctive stylistic characteristics and at the same time interpret the piece's lyrical content. Susana (and Rai) are taken 'there' until Javi comes and drags Rai away from Susana's bedroom. Latin America and adult sexuality are swiftly brought to them through the music and her dance, whose combination makes the audiovisual cue quite effective. The visuals, the music and the words are all pulling towards somewhere unknown and fascinating. The way the visuals seize and develop the Otherness(es) the music and words release into the film world anchors the association between Latin American music and natural paradises, physicality, passion, etc., to the narrative, placing the connotation the visuals develop in the foreground and leaving all the other connotations Latin American music could evoke and weave into the narrative in the background. On the surface level the scene I have just described functions through its unidirectionality, because visualisation selects

and foregrounds certain cultural meanings and not others, potentially channelling interpretations towards using these materials (i.e. the tropical associations Latin American sounds invoke).

But the audiovisual placement of songs can leave their interpretations more open as well as create a parallel film world in which the space where the story takes place and the space the music invokes combine and overlap, opening interesting paths for identifications where multidirectionality substitutes the unidirectionality I outline above. Kassabian's description of postmodern musical tourism, again, seems to provide interesting correspondences. Where she discusses the entanglement offered by today's musical tourism and its postmodern quality using Putumayo world music collections as example she notes how:

> as a Putumayo listener [I am] both here and there, wherever there may be. Whereas many writers of postmodernity argue that the distinction between 'here' and 'there' is collapsed, rendered meaningless, I am arguing quite the contrary. Distributed tourism, as a postmodern cultural activity, depends on maintaining the difference between 'here' and 'there' while making it possible to inhabit both spaces simultaneously. Musically, these recordings are the verso of the 101 Strings' recto: the musical structures are non-local, while a layer of pop/rock/electronica material is mixed in for comfort.
>
> (Kassabian 2004, p. 219)

While the interaction between 'Devórame Otra Vez' and Susana's dance moves the spotlight on the connotations brought in by the music and further highlighted by the visuals, there are a few sequences where the absence of a clear visualisation of a meaning offered through songs or even the presence of a contrasting visualisations of what the music can evoke produce a rather different audiovisual cue.

The opening montage sequence featuring the instrumental collage of 'La llave de mi corazón' seems to be there to offer audiences somewhere similar to where Kassabian's Putumayo listener is. The visuals display the diversity found in the Madrid neighbourhood where the story takes place and the music, where different non-local as well as more familiar elements coexist, can offer different identifications. Unlike Susana's song this track is dramatic, but, while the presence of sources of music in the visuals can suggest the presence of music in the film world, these sources of music do not privilege a certain meaning offered by the music over another or at least they do not do so as explicitly as Susana's dance does.

Furthermore, a piece including different musical languages makes the precise visualisation of a meaning one element carries quite difficult (for example, the synergy between Susana's dance and a salsa-hip hop piece, I imagine, would not produce the effects salsa alone helps achieve). All these factors provide fertile terrain where one can elaborate identifications characterised by a certain multidirectionality as opposed to Susana's dance where visualisation and the piece's unadulterated genre produce a 'tighter' audiovisual cue. Therefore the opening montage, I would argue, can offer a wider variety of identifications because the track makes any association for its eastern, Latin American, and hip hop musical ingredients available and the visuals introduce a similarly diverse human landscape where nothing overtly recalls any one meaning its dramatic soundtrack carries the way Susana interacts with specific meanings her source soundtrack carries.

Where 'La llave de mi corazón' returns later its lyrical content could reflect how Manu feels about the black woman, which, I guess, could place the music in the dimension I have named inner scoring in the section about *Radiofreccia* in Chapter Four, but again the absence of significant reference to the music appears to leave the perceiver positioning more open towards different, perhaps contrasting, identifications. Are the song's mariachi trumpets meant to suggest tropicalism, poverty, foreignness, desire to escape? And how about its hip hop style vocal performance? Again, the piece's genre diversity and the absence of strong interaction between one meaning the music carries on the one hand and the visuals and dialogues on the other seems to leave questions regarding which association emerges and strikes a chord with us without a defined offer. But let us look at it in the light of Kassabian's suggestions about where postmodern musical tourism positions listeners. The 'here' and 'there' are inhabited at the same time by us in the sense that the 'there' we as perceivers outside the film world hear in that song is more to do with the 'here' we inhabit – and how our 'here' affects which 'there' we hear – than with the 'here' Manu and his friends inhabit, because their 'here' fails to explicitly suggest which 'there' to go to, thus leaving perceivers' identifications free to range from hearing their *barrio* as a space whose inhabitants are aurally longing for another place to somewhere foreign, alien, distant. But how about the source songs?

The multidirectionality I attribute to both sequences featuring 'La llave de mi corazón' as dramatic song, however, appears limited in the example I am about to

discuss, where a Latin American song receives a rather unusual treatment. Halfway through the film a few *gitanos* accompanied by an equilibrist goat show perform 'Moliendo Café' by Venezuelan songwriter José Manzo Perroni between the housing projects and the railway lines. 'Moliendo Café', a known Latin American piece, here features mariachi trumpets and a quiet synthesised rhythmic base, and the fact that it is performed by *gitanos*, I would argue, further complicates the 'here' and 'there' the scene makes available. The setting makes the connection between the music and the visuals quite obvious and yet a bit unusual. While Susana's dance roughly matches the exoticism and sensual lyrical content of 'Devórame Otra Vez', the *gitanos* and their traditional, perhaps stereotypical performance[38] hardly have anything to do with 'Moliendo Café' visually. Despite the trumpet being recurrent in these kinds of shows, the overall sound foregrounds the piece's Latin American origins. The contrast between the group performing the piece – who despite the typically *gitano* setting and instruments sound unusually Latin – and its Latin American origins – which the version heard on the soundtrack definitely highlights – means the source song's visualisation does not point towards and develop one meaning 'Moliendo Café' carries but instead undercuts the 'there' the piece could offer, hinders tropicalisation. 'Here' and 'there' coexist and the difference between 'here' and 'there' remains, but rather than enabling the three young listeners who watch the *gitanos* in the film world and the perceivers who watch the film world from outside to inhabit both spaces simultaneously it takes us 'nowhere'. While the match between Susana's dance and the potential meaning 'Devórame Otra Vez' conveys allowed a comfortable 'there' to temporarily enter the film world, now the clash between the music and its visualisation potentially damages the effectiveness and reveals the emptiness of the 'there' Latin American music has offered through the first half of the film.

Kassabian notes how distributed tourism reinforces relations of authenticity between 'here' and 'there', where ''here' becomes false, virtual, the simulacrum, the infinite Starbucks shops of *The Simpsons*' episode, while 'there' maintains an innocent, untainted relationship to authenticity, easily pictured by Putumayo's cover art' (p. 221) and continues:

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[38] Equilibrist goats are a recurrent feature in the shows *gitanos* musicians improvise on the streets in Spain.

> Distributed tourism, and therefore distributed subjectivity, depends on the oxymoronic quality of this dichotomy: in order to bridge it through entanglement, to produce the distributed tourism I'm describing, the distinction must be maintained. In other words, it must simultaneously be maintained and erased. One must hear the 'authentic' music of 'there', produced by local musicians; one must hear it 'here'; and one must hear the difference between the two spaces in order to be able to occupy both simultaneously and be 't/here'.
>
> (Kassabian 2004, p. 221)

While for Javi, Manu, and Rai their 'here' has become all the things Kassabian talks about in the first passage I quote – a nightmare dimension where nothing is as good as it appears to be 'there' – the space 'there' and its imagery and music allegedly stand for start crumbling and vanishing, revealing the empty simulacra of a fantasy world, empty boxes wrapped in glittering paper, whose discovery positions the three friends neither 'here' nor 'there', stuck between their lack of belief in their daily 'here' and the progressive crumbling of belief in a 'there' which they discover to be unavailable to anybody they know. Instead of being 't/here' next to Kassabian's distributed tourist, they inhabit a surreal 'nowhere', a non-dimension where hip hop and rock songs gradually replace the Latin American songs and musical hints at Latin America disappear alongside the boys' hopes.

Musically the *gitanos*' performance of 'Moliendo Café' bears discernible signs of these aural simulacra's emptiness in their rickety arrangement where the cheap, synthetic sound of 'here' (the synthesiser) and the way the musicians chaotically deliver the authentic sound of 'there' (the trumpet lines, which often overlap and digress without following the right tempo), which unveils its 'falseness'. Also, like 'La llave de mi corazón', this version of 'Moliendo Café' mixes different musical languages including the familiar sounds of a synthesiser and hip hop vocal performance, unlike 'Devórame otra vez' whose overall sound remains quite uniform and generally matches its origins. However, 'La llave de mi corazón' and 'Devórame otra vez' match their visualisation, whereas the incongruity between 'Moliendo Café' and its odd visualisation not only sabotages its own evocative power, undermining the 'there' the piece could bring along, but also damages the evocative power Latin American music holds in the overall musical economy of *Barrio*. 'Moliendo Café' may not break the spell instantly, but its audiovisual

treatment initiates the decline of Latin American music's power to effectively evoke 'there' in the film, thus starting to pull the rug from under their feet. Their conversations are again centred on earning money, presumably for the purpose of a beach holiday. The visuals place the boys away from everyone else on the railway lines, which reaffirms their potential going somewhere whose realisation never quite happens, thus leaving them without a way out despite all the symbolic movement around them – a recurrent visual theme exemplified by Rai's water scooter chained outside his house, their aimless round trips on the metro, the sequences where all three sit on the motorway bridge and stare at the cars below, and the scene where Manu's discovery about Rafa is accompanied by a passing train above the junkies' den below the railway lines. The visuals suggest their longing for a getaway but their trips are never leading somewhere outside the neighbourhood; their minds are wandering towards another place but their plans are uncertain; the *gitanos*' performance defuses the potential for musical tourism 'Moliendo Café' possesses. The whole scene bears several signs clearly hinting at the dissolution of their dream, which unfolds after 'Moliendo Café' first appears and snowballs towards the final tragedy, where the whole scene including its final moments returns. The *gitanos*' performance of 'Moliendo Café' works as a watershed between the first hopeful half of the story and its disillusioned conclusion where Javi confesses that he does not remember his dreams, which was omitted the first time and now reveals the loss of those childhood dreams that perhaps never existed.

The one other Latin American song to feature in *Barrio* after 'Moliendo Café' is playing on the portable radio at the tropical party Javi, Manu and Rai throw themselves under the motorway bridge where they are shown hanging out earlier. After stealing all the shiny posters and props on display in the travel agency's window, the three friends try to turn their rundown gathering place into some kind of Caribbean 'there' using the burgled items, which include the first simulacrum of 'there' the boys are shown talking about, the cardboard cut-out *mulata*, with whom Rai is dancing to 'Virgen del cobre' by Cuban singer Celina González. The fantasy ends abruptly when Manu and Rai break the cardboard *mulata*'s head as they fight about who has the right to dance with her. The decapitated cardboard cut-out reveals the sheer emptiness of a tropicalising fantasy fuelled through the film by all the simulacra Cruz-Cámara discusses and the myths about Caribbean paradises and

beautiful women the boys often argue about. Javi stops the music shortly after the incident, which aurally seals the rupture between simulation and the 'there' they believed each simulacrum they surrounded themselves with could bring to their 'here'. After 'Virgen del cobre' is interrupted Latin American music does not feature again until the flashback showing the *gitanos* playing 'Moliendo Café'. Overall, the Latin American songs and those showing clear Latin American influence accompany moments where a character finds himself close to a desired Other or is shown working towards it. Other sequences where Latin American music is heard, for example, feature Manu working as a pizza boy despite not being motorised while Amparanoia's Latin-inflected 'Hacer Dinero' is heard on the dramatic soundtrack. Furthermore, other Latin American songs are heard playing in Susana's bedroom – a space whose Otherness and therefore fascination is established in the scene where Rai watches her dance.

As I tried to demonstrate through my examination of Latin American music's power to evoke the Other and bring the 'there' the boys yearn for into their 'here', the audiovisual placement these songs receive can influence the range of associations one hears in the film. But the surface meaning these songs – and perhaps their genre alone – carry can offer identifications where tropicalised ideas about the Other eclipse Latin American music's potential functions as a catalyser for evasion for the inhabitants of *Barrio*'s film world. Isabel Santaolalla's essay (2000) about the exoticisation of Italianness in Spike Lee's *Jungle Fever* paves the way for understanding differences other than ethnicity and race as sources of exoticism. Her study shows how national identity can evoke the Otherness a 'white' character possesses the way visible racial differences immediately spell Otherness for a black character. While their looks are racially unmarked and their accents quite average, Javi, Manu, and Rai represent the socially different, a trait which the setting and conversations clearly express and may sometimes surface through their musical practices, too (cassettes and old rickety playback technology at Javi's as opposed to CDs and big shiny headphones in the music store). But what about the songs?

In the soundtrack album booklet notes the director himself describes them as 'Música de barrio [...] Música que pertenecía ya a la película mucho antes de rodarla' (barrio music [...] music that belonged to the film long before it was shot) (Léon de Aranoa, 1998). However, those songs may quickly evoke the environment where the

film takes place for few and evoke wider general ideas about exoticism (Latin American music), black youth's criminalisation and ghettoisation (hip hop), and disaffected urban youth (hip hop and rock) for several, and perhaps offer a distant perspective on the unknown class dimension presented in *Barrio*. The Otherness the music brings with it thus combines with the visible Otherness the visuals and dialogues exude, increasing the feeling of separation between our daily lives and their world. The general hopeful theme the sequences featuring Latin American music share does not therefore block out different interpretations where Latin American and hip hop vibes can suggest connections between the songs and their respective contexts of origin. Kassabian notes how the Starbucks and Putumayo world music CDs 'are based on musical practices in countries associated with coffee, such as Brazil and Cuba' (Kassabian 2004, p. 212). Similarly, there are obvious associations between several songs featuring on the soundtrack of *Barrio* and musical practices based in countries and urban areas where poverty and lack of future prospects affect the people living behind the glossy simulacra outsiders are fed – a paradox Kassabian (2004) discusses briefly, but which remains outside her article's scope. These connections between 'there' (the coffee countries, the countries and urban areas where *Barrio*'s songs originated) and the reality beneath its simulated surface can encourage positions where one hears Latin American music and hip hop as a musical reinforcement or development of those ideas about poverty, about being trapped somewhere without prospects, which pervade the film world where the boys are never shown somewhere other than their neighbourhood. These songs of other areas where these realities are often found can perhaps construct the world Javi, Manu, and Rai inhabit as a distant dimension through the Otherness the music can suggest. But where audiences attribute two different associative universes to Latin American music and hip hop there are a few sequences where the music marks several significant discoveries in the second half of the film.

The first hip hop piece, 'Canción Prohibida' by Hechos contra el decoro, is used on four short sequences scattered through the story showing the boys on the metro train, moving and yet really going nowhere, as Cruz-Cámara also points out:

> una imagen recorre la película a modo de leitmotiv: los tres chicos aparecen encuadrados dentro del túnel y del vagón del metro a la vez que se superponen letras musicales como ésta: 'Camino en círculos concéntricos, no

> soy dueño de mis sueños, / cada paso es un anhelo repetido, repito, cada paso. / Y otra vez el mismo mapa, que le mantiene encerrado, / estación tras estación, desengaño tras desengaño'. El encuadre y las letras de las canciones, más el hecho de que los chicos solamente realicen el trayectos de ida y vuelta (al barrio), niegan el sentido positivo que el motivo del viaje pudiera poseer, ya que éste se configura como un recorrido circular a ninguna parte.
> (an image runs through the film like a leitmotiv: the three boys appear framed inside the tunnel and the carriage of the metro as lyrics like the following are juxtaposed: 'I walk in concentric circles, I'm not the owner of my dreams, / each step is a repeated longing, I repeat, each step. / And one more time the same map, that keeps it locked in, / station after station, disappointment after disappointment'. The framing and the lyrics of the songs, plus the fact that the boys only ever do return trips (back to the barrio), negate the positive meaning that the motif of the journey could possess, as this is configured as a circular path to nowhere)
>
> (Cruz-Cámara 2005, p. 60)

The way their framing and the dramatic song interact (lyrically and musically) in these metro trips to nowhere does more than just working against any hopeful connotation the journey may carry. While the lyrical relevance to their condition emerges quite obviously in the passage Cruz-Cámara cites, musically the piece employs a few jazzy trumpet bridges in a sound constructed using hip hop rhythms and vocal style alongside a quiet funky guitar. All these musical elements can carry a range of associations with blackness, thus offering different aural symbols of another marginalised culture through which audiences can enter the world the three friends inhabit. The vocal performance's scant melodic variation underscores the theme the words develop (repetition and entrapment) and the way the three friends are initially shown reflected on train windows revealing nothing but unlit tunnels outside constitutes, I think, a complex audiovisual manifestation of their going nowhere and being nowhere, their being the invisibles beneath the simulacra through which the media present their world. While I share Cruz-Cámara's view that *Barrio* removes its protagonists from social invisibility by representing them, I cannot help but hearing the musical shift following the *gitanos*' performance as a grave sign of their sinking back into that 'here' they have attempted to escape but that is ineluctably closing in on them, this time without innocent beliefs regarding the existence of a 'there' at their reach.

If Latin American music marks the 'there' the three friends yearn for, the hip hop and rock songs are quickly established as the aural signifier of the 'nowhere' which progressively engulfs their lives, pushing Javi and Manu back into

hopelessness, and leading Rai towards his death. A policeman catches Rai forcing his car locks and fires his gun, killing the boy instantly – a scene which, alongside other sequences where reality strikes and something bad happens, remains without music. Rock songs and hip hop usually accompany those sequences where trouble looms and simulacra pop revealing their emptiness, but where a serious event affecting a character happens music is either erased by louder sounds or absent. After a row between his parents, Javi plays 'Jesucristo García' by Spanish rock band Extremoduro on the cassette player in the small bedroom he is made to share with his deaf grandfather, who keeps napping while Javi and Rai are hanging out and playing music. Later Javi plays 'Confessions' by Mexican-American rap duo Tha Mexakinz on the walkman to drown out his parents' umpteenth fight. Both songs begin as source and shift to dramatic into the following scene. 'Jesucristo García' briefly lingers on the first few shots showing their afternoon out pilfering flowers in the cemetery and another rock song, 'Expresión directa' by Madrid rap-metal act Habeas Corpus, is playing in the bar where they attempt to sell the flowers to a young crowd reminiscent of the Kronen boys and girls. 'Confessions' follows Manu delivering pizza on the bus his pizzeria boss unexpectedly catches and later 'Zona Roja', another piece by Hechos contra el decoro, features as dramatic soundtrack when Rai is released from jail. Finally, the quieter instrumental intermission of 'Canción Prohibida' appears as a dramatic song when Manu finds the mystery *mulata* naked in the old man's apartment. However, nothing but silence accompanies the scene where Susana tells Javi their parents are getting separated, Rai's arrest and police interrogation, and his death, while where Manu spots his brother among the other junkies a train comes above their den and its deafening sound effaces the music. In this sequence, 'Con esos ojitos' by Barcelona rap act 7 Notas 7 Colores takes the association between hip hop music and hard times to a whole new level. Its instrumental final part is used as dramatic music where Manu finds out the truth about his brother Rafa, whom he unexpectedly sees inject heroin under a railway underpass populated by junkies as he wanders off towards where his pizzeria boss had disappeared after getting off the bus a day earlier.

Another simulacrum reveals its emptiness, as the whereabouts of his brother are carefully disguised under the stories Manu's dad tells him about Rafa being somewhere outside the neighbourhood, working, sending money and gifts for his

younger brother, and generally being happy. But after finding out the truth Manu plays along and finally becomes a knowing participant in the fantasy their father created to alleviate the unbearable weight of reality through the simulation of happiness. If he begun concealing the truth for Manu, now Manu steps onboard his fantasy for him and the two embrace the simulation of happiness because the real thing is painfully unavailable to them. However, as Cruz-Cámara notes, for Manu and his friends the simulacrum fails to implode to produce hyperreality and all the simulacra they live by fail to deliver their promise, which is instead defused by their disillusion about how far their reality can stretch. Like their dream to leave their 'here' for a nicer 'there' takes them 'nowhere', their reality fails to implode to hyperreality and instead turns nastier. But the simulacra whose emptiness gradually comes out are still sometimes saved for comfort despite their meaninglessness – like Manu's brother's fictional success – while other simulacra are dropped – like Latin American music. Rock songs and hip hop quickly replace Latin American songs as we watch their dream crumble and, quite interestingly, the one character who plays a rock song and a hip hop piece using cassettes (another interesting technological signifier of their exclusion) is Javi, the cynical kid, who earlier had interrupted Rai's daydreaming as he gazed at Susana dance to salsa and later stops their Cuban party music after Manu and Rai break the cardboard *mulata*'s head.

As anticipated earlier, the scene where Rai gazes at the feminine Other dancing to the tropical Other's music calls for further attention. While I share Cruz-Cámara's hopeful remarks about *Barrio*'s effective removal of these inhabitants of the margins from their social invisibility, I did not comment about a few significant sequences where something happens that removes them. Their being gazed at is often interrupted by their gazing at their Other, be it tropical, female, or both. Frances R. Aparicio discusses 'the figure of the mulatta and/or the black woman dancing, walking, or moving to the musical rhythms of the Caribbean' which she terms 'the rhythmic mulatta' (2000, p. 95) and, while neither the *mulata* Manu furtively gazes at nor Susana embody the figure Aparicio analyses, its relevance gradually becomes clear. Aparicio defines the process whereby rhythms are ethnified and cultures feminised:

> While the icon of the rhythmic mulatta builds on the social and patriarchal imaginary of nation, particularly in the Caribbean, it is also deployed

> interculturally to ethnify and feminize Third World cultures. Within the boundaries of nation, the female is constituted as Other; in larger, transnational cultural transactions the (Caribbean or Latin American) nation itself becomes feminized by an imperial, colonizing gaze. To be ethnified, then, is to be constructed and displaced as Other […] Concomitantly, to be feminized is to be re-presented with feminine attributes, or as a woman, in order to be depoliticized, to be rendered invisible, mute, as a passive, erotized object rather than an active subject or agent of culture.
>
> (Aparicio 2000, p. 96)

Through gazing at tropicalised females and evoking the Caribbean or Latin American 'there' through songs, Javi, Manu, and Rai attempt to abandon their passive positioning (being gazed at) and reach an active subject positioning (gazing at). Those moments allow for their temporary transcendence of that dimension where they simply are the objects of that gaze towards the Other and every encounter of this kind perfectly matches the brief but effective description Santaolalla gives of a similar scene in *Jungle Fever* whose 'two typical ingredients', she notes, are 'ignorance about and fascination for the other' (2000, p. 169).

All these moments where the boys encounter their unknown and fascinating Other are accompanied by Latin American sounds. Both real women – the *mulata* Manu furtively gazes at on several occasions and Susana – are musically defined through dramatic Latin influenced hip hop and source salsa, the one exception being the scene where Manu finds out the mystery *mulata* is a prostitute while hip hop briefly appears in the dramatic soundtrack. But the Other never appears as a whole or remains present through songs. While disparate parts of the rhythmic mulatta are available – the cardboard and the real *mulatas*, Susana dancing to the musical rhythms of the Caribbean, and other Latin American songs – these are all separated parts, and neither parts alone suffice, which hinders their attempt. The 'there' the songs could bring becomes defused after the *gitanos*' performance of 'Moliendo Café'. Their gaze remains divided between several parts, but never finds one object, while the songs heard in the film world and the 'there' these could offer are often disrupted. Significantly, their chronic failure to inhabit a dominant gaze not only sabotages their virtual escapes, but also compromises the possibility for the Other to be perceived as politicised, visible, vocal, active subject or agent of culture. Their tropicalising gazes and their failure to look and listen beyond the simulacra of the Other they want to have leaves them isolated from other potentially connective

marginalities alongside which the three friends could fight their way out. Instead of empowerment, their attempt to temporarily inhabit a dominant gaze mars them with that same essentialising gaze news reports inflict on them.

But perhaps the scene where the process I trace above becomes clearer is when they walk through the ghost station and see – and hear – their lower Other first hand. After narrowly missing the last train on Manu's birthday, the three friends start walking along the empty metro tunnels and finally see the ghost station. As they approach it 'Douha Alia' by Algerian rai artist Cheb Mami gradually increases in volume and while the boys walk along the railway its source – a big portable cassette player – is shown. The ghost station and its sound, I would argue, represent a quite overt, clearly visible and audible, variety of Other, while women, Spanish or Caribbean, and Latin American music represent a different order of Otherness. Earlier, the ghost station's existence becomes a topic for a few conversations where ignorance about and fascination for a totally unknown Other are clearly expressed. Alongside perhaps the *gitanos*, the African immigrants who inhabit the ghost station are a lower class even for Javi, Manu, and Rai, and the music playing on their cassette player takes the 'here' these men and women left to a 'there' where hopes for a brighter future are now trapped underground, in the obscure 'nowhere' of a disused metro station – yet another place where travelling happens for everybody but its occupiers. *Barrio* makes its protagonists visible, but, again, not without using their still largely invisible Other as a means to reach upwards, outside the dimension inhabited by those who are traditionally objectified in the gaze game. Through their gaze at someone who lives under their world, somewhere lower – physically as well as socially – Javi, Manu, and Rai share the unaware, ignorant and fascinated gaze at a lower Other through which audiences could be considering their world. Their new positioning as subjects of this game brings them closer to 'us', narrowing the gap between 'us and them' and perhaps assisting cross-class identifications. But through the process I discuss above, I would argue, their positioning vis-à-vis other marginalities is compromised.

Barrio raises several interesting questions about how music whose sound and words quickly evoke another, often quite precise place works in a film where the characters inhabit a space outside the identities the media offer them. The narrative becomes the audiovisual crossroad where different connections between music and

the narrative's other non-musical aspects combine, producing audiovisual scenarios where diverging identifications can occur depending on the items one unpacks from the baggage songs carry. Whether using whichever pre-cinematic meaning one hears first or letting the connections gradually built between songs and certain narrative moments in the film guide our identifications, audiences tread paths through cinematic narrative via music and sound in more intricate manners than most of us realise. In a film where Spanish sunny imagery is nothing but a distant image on the TV screens in their homes, Javi, Manu, and Rai's lives outside the frame are brought close, without sentimentalisms or happy endings. Their searching for a nicer 'there' fails, Javi keeps his disillusion, Manu his empty stories about his brother, and the two share their grief for Rai's pointless death on the final painful train journey accompanied by 'Canción Prohibida'. The music surrounding every character articulates their different positions vis-à-vis their dream and songs punctuate their journey towards the realisation of their dream's inaccessibility. As I hope to have demonstrated, without a careful appraisal of films as audiovisual texts the differences forming today's Spain can remain unnoticed and the way audiences negotiate identifications where our societies' margins finally reach the silver screen go unheard.

Krámpack

End of a Summer

Cesc Gay's adaptation of Jordi Sánchez's play (1998) is a tale of two teenagers home alone in the summer of sexual awakening. The story takes place in the Catalan seaside village where Dani's (Fernando Ramallo) parents own a house with swimming pool, sea views, and a French au-pair who cooks for him and his guest Nico (Jordi Vilches), who arrives right after Dani's parents leave for Egypt. While Nico, despite his curiosity for the odd homosexual experiment, clearly likes girls and pursues Elena (Marieta Orozco) for the whole holiday, Dani remains largely indifferent to Elena's cousin, Berta (Esther Nubiola), who overtly likes him but never grabs his attention. Instead, Dani has a crush on Nico and, after increasing intimacy

between the two results in one-off penetrative sex, disappointment follows awkwardness and Dani seeks out Julián (Chisco Amado), the forty-something family friend Dani briefly falls for who, however, quickly loses his charm. The two teenagers reconcile and Nico departs, leaving Dani in the closing scene where, sitting on the beach between two young women and a young man, he gazes at the two options, but finally walks towards the sea. In the end their closeness seems unaltered despite the resentful reactions their sex experiments had initially triggered, but music marks Dani and Nico apart, and articulates other differences in the film.

Krámpack's setting and *Barrio*'s rundown neighbourhood are polar opposites, and yet somehow connected through the obvious resemblance between the permanent beach holiday Dani lives and the simulacra Javi, Manu, and Rai yearned for, but, while the latter never reach their desired Other and finally realise its non-existence, Dani is that Other the heteronormative order tries to contain. Despite its urban setting and the different age group portrayed, *Historias del Kronen* shows a similar musical differentiation between heteronormative masculinity and homosexuality. However, while *Historias del Kronen* gives roughly similar songs to every character whose behaviour somehow threatens patriarchal norms and hinders homosociality, *Krámpack*'s music marks its heterosexual males and homosexual males apart, changes to reflect different generations among males and females, and marks the younger threatening females and the younger homosexual character apart.

Marianne (Myriam Mézières) – the French au pair – and Sonia (Ana Gracia) – Dani's private English teacher – represent adult females and are largely without significant musical association – the one exception being, perhaps, Marianne. After Nico's arrival, Nico and Dani go home where Marianne is sitting in the kitchen preparing *gazpacho* while listening to 'Ser Una Chica', a quiet acoustic song sung in Spanish by Myriam Mézières, the actress and screenwriter who plays Marianne. The other audible piece that could represent Marianne is Bizet's 'Carmen' playing one evening while Marianne, Dani and Nico have dinner outdoors. Given Dani's and Nico's musical choices up to then, 'Carmen' could be assumed to be Marianne's choice or music Dani selects because Marianne is there. Marianne is French and 'Carmen' being a French opera makes the association between her and the piece quite obvious. Mézières's own 'Ser Una Chica' – a fascinating musical selection – is playing in the house while Marianne is there alone, which implies she chose the

piece. These two different songs could represent Marianne's slippery identity – a beautiful Marseillaise who can speak perfect Spanish and prepare a Spanish specialty, and who often expresses dissatisfaction about her languishing social life, but talks encouragingly about leaving one's country to Nico after his impertinent enquiry about when she is returning to France. Interestingly, the multinational identity and placeless existence Mézières's own website[39] biography's opening paragraph foregrounds closely matches the nationally ambiguous quality her character possesses, a feature partially constructed through the music surrounding her and potentially accentuated through any knowledge about Mézières's origins.

While Marianne's foreignness is obvious, Sonia, despite being Spanish and without music, enables Dani's exploration of a foreign and non-heteronormative Other. Sonia teaches Dani English, which, alongside a conversation between her and Dani where she confesses her own teenage homosexual romance, can construct her character as a potential enabler as well as source of open encouragement and adult authorisation for Dani's own exploration of a foreign Other and his 'different' sexuality. The two adult females who feature in the film offer Dani support that remains unavailable to Roberto in *Historias del Kronen*, where women are nothing but obstacles between him and Carlos, but are not helping Roberto, who represses his desires until the end.

In *Krámpack* the moments where the younger females come between Dani and Nico are accompanied by upbeat party tunes in English, sometimes performed by females – a feature these songs and Marianne's two songs share. At the beach party where Dani and Nico are meeting the girls after their dinner with Marianne, the songs are all rather upbeat, in English, and featuring women singers, as Elena and Berta come between Dani and Nico without knowing. Later, the two friends throw a party at the house and welcome the two girls as 'Thank You' by Spanish garage rockers Doctor Explosion is playing on the stereo. 'Thank You' is sung by male vocalist Jorge Muñoz, but the band's style positions the piece alongside the other buoyant party tunes, setting these and Dani's quieter and often melancholic songs apart. At the house party, Nico improvises a strip tease to another Doctor Explosion piece, 'La Chatunga'. Interestingly, the one track performed by a Spanish band in

[39] 'Daughter of an Egyptian father and a pianist mother of Czech origin, Myriam Mézières was brought up in France in an orphanage. But she considers the world of stage and screen as her real country.' <http://www.myriam-mezieres.net/en.php3> [Accessed 10 March 2010].

Spanish accompanies the one non-gay male as he tries to undress to impress two Spanish females. Berta is shown performing a shorter strip tease afterwards, but Nico dominates the scene and Dani, sitting between the two girls, watches and catches his clothes. Among the few non-English-language songs, 'La Chatunga' is perhaps the most prominent track, a source song that loudly invades the soundtrack, leaving other source sounds largely drowned out. The association between the piece and the one non-gay man seems to point towards a musical partition between gay and non-gay similar to that in *Historias del Kronen*, where songs in Spanish accompany moments where heteronormative masculinity dominates and sequences where the one gay character, Roberto, becomes assimilated as the stereotypical macho, whether voluntarily or by force because Carlos rejects his affection. Again, the two soundtracks use a different genre for heteronormative masculinity and homosociality on the one hand, and its different enemies on the other, whose appearances are often accompanied by English-language songs. While the songs heard where different threats against heteronormative masculinity and homosociality are shown in *Historias del Kronen* are often similar, *Krámpack* has different music for Nico, the two girls who come between him and Nico, and Julián.

The moments where Dani can sense Nico wandering off and evading his affection are often accompanied by English-language songs by Catalan bands and, while a few other English-language songs feature in the film, his share certain stylistic characteristics. All these songs are generally quieter and include a few introspective indie ballads and one melancholic acoustic song, 'Montserrat' by Catalan-American singer-songwriter Paul Fustér, which I shall discuss in depth later. The other songs are all written and performed by Majorcan indie rockers Satellite ('Where My Friends Are Gone' and 'In 1998') and short-lived Barcelona-based indie group Holland Park ('End of Summer' and 'Psychedelic Harpsichord'), and all five songs share genre stylistic characteristics and melancholic lyrical content, sometimes reflected in the music. These are all indie songs performed in English by Catalan bands who enjoyed significant success in Spain in the late 1990s.

The Satellites' piece 'Where My Friends Are Gone' appears twice to frame Dani and Nico's time together at home. After Nico's arrival, Dani is playing 'Where My Friends Are Gone' on the record player in the house. As they hastily prepare for a fishing daytrip at the harbour, Nico talks about his growing Adam's apple and its

association with virility, observing how girls see a big Adam's apple as a signifier of 'other things', after which Dani stops the music and the two friends leave the house. On the road to the harbour they meet Elena, a friend of Dani's, who invites the boys to join her and her cousin Berta at the bar for a drink. 'End of Summer' by Holland Park is playing in the bar where Dani resentfully witnesses Nico's growing curiosity for the two cousins.

Later, the party the two friends throw for the girls at the house ends, leaving Nico unsatisfied after Dani's Valium-laced sangria defeats Berta and the girls leave early. After their disappointing departure, Dani convinces a drunken and aroused Nico to move on from mutual masturbation and try penetrative sex instead. Nico accepts Dani's offer, but justifies his unwillingness to reverse roles by playing the clichéd headache card. The morning after, Dani surprises Nico serving him a sumptuous breakfast in bed, which makes Nico visibly uncomfortable. As they sunbathe poolside, 'Montserrat' by Paul Fustér is heard, maybe playing in the house, when Dani asks Nico 'if I died, what would you do?', leaving Nico quite perplexed, and tells him 'I would not like to die by myself, I would like it if we died at the same time', which further estranges Nico. The volume increases, marking the music's shift from source to dramatic, and 'Montserrat' continues, now scoring Dani as he fetches two beers and joins Nico outside, where he is working on the old motorbike Dani's parents own. Dani expresses his affection for Nico again, and again Nico's awkward reactions leave him high and dry. The following scene unfolds indoors where Dani gives Nico a shirt that once belonged to his older brother, who has now emigrated, as a present. Another melancholic piece, 'In 1998' by Satellites, is heard as awkwardness increases, but their naïve attempt to cook macaroni in a dry frying pan and the ensuing charred pasta temporarily lifts the tension.

Towards the end, another Holland Park track is heard as Dani, after finding out about Elena and Nico's planned sex encounter, tries to prove Nico is a homosexual. 'Psychedelic Harpsichord' accompanies Dani's desperate attempt to prevent this encounter, which again exposes Dani's vulnerability about Nico. Right after Elena's departure, Dani rejects Berta's undesired courtship as 'Where My Friends Are Gone' is playing in the bar outside which Berta stops him. The Satellites' piece returns for the third and last time in the closing sequences where Dani and Nico reconcile, are shown going hunting in the hills and skinny-dipping off

the rocky coast. Its intro bridges the cut between the extreme long shot showing Nico and Dani sitting in bed sharing a cigarette after a brief appeasement without any explanation and two short sequences showing their day in the hills and at the seaside. Its obvious dramatic placement changes as Nico is shown packing Dani's brother's shirt in the house where the music has now audibly shifted to source. Their final moments together in the house combine awkwardness and irony. However, while the tension pervading the earlier sequences has obviously settled, the connotative meaning the piece has accrued through its earlier occurrences may suggest Dani's emotional confusion.

After leaving Berta on the night Elena and Nico are meeting for pre-planned sex, Dani rides his bicycle along empty residential streets and finds Julián unloading his car outside his house. Julián notices his bad emotional state and invites Dani to join him, Sonia, and their friends for dinner. Dani initially refuses, but returns later, surprises Julián and Sonia – who appears quite perplexed – and meets their friends in the dining room where jazz is playing. Shortly after, a blues song in English is heard in the kitchen where Julián and a guest are doing cocaine on the counter. Another blues piece follows later. While the songs accompanying every character whose behaviour threatens heteronormative masculinity and homosociality, and the one track with which Nico visibly engages are set apart by the language of their lyrics, Julián's songs are set apart through their genre, which draws further divisions. All the young boys and girls are associated with contemporary songs, whereas the music surrounding Marianne and Julián is either inspired by or from earlier periods. Nothing resembling Marianne's acoustic ballad or opera is heard on the soundtrack and, while blues and jazz feature in the score, there is no other character defined through blues or jazz in the film world. Julián's exclusive blues and jazz association offer scope for different, perhaps non-conflicting interpretations, which are nonetheless worth investigating further. Blues is first heard on Julián's car stereo where a brief snippet of score turns to source during a chapter transition signposted by an intertitle. The cue stops after Julián is clearly seen turning off the music.

The blues piece was originally composed for the soundtrack by Diaz, Prats, and Sabatés (authors of other shorter parts of chiefly blues-influenced score). The blues track, 'My Baby's Gone', appears in the end credits as 'licensed by Plusmusic', without authors or musicians named. While neither the anonymous Plusmusic piece

nor the score parts are pre-existing songs, their clear genre reference aurally characterises Julián, placing his musical choices in the foreign songs group, while setting him and Dani apart through the distinction between his contemporary popular songs and the 'older' musical genre Julián's songs revisit. Potential connections may arise between Julián's consumption of alcohol and cocaine and his music, however anonymous and stereotypical the blues and jazz he listens to might be. Furthermore, using blues and jazz for a grown-up homosexual man could offer other interpretations for Julián's character where ideas about black masculinity and discriminations against black men can cross paths and allow interesting identifications for Dani's older crush. Blues and jazz's associative power and all the other information one gathers about Julián can combine and construct gay masculinity through connotations of authenticity[40] jazz and blues can bring. Alongside these potential connections, the music surrounding him can evoke the discriminations African-Americans experienced and offer a correlation between the victims of racism and those of homophobia. Finally, while Dani's and Julián's songs reflect their different generations, revealing the differences between their own stories, all their songs share different but clear Anglo-American genre characteristics. The two men are routinely accompanied by these musically and lyrically 'foreign' songs, often performed by male singers. Both of Marianne's cues, on the other hand, are performed by female singers, as is the odd piece heard where Elena and Berta come between Dani and Nico.

Among the songs Dani chooses for the moments spent alone with Nico, Paul Fustér's 'Montserrat' calls for further consideration. After switching from source to dramatic in the lengthy sequence where Dani maladroitly expresses his emotional state, the piece reappears somewhere unpredictable and quite significant. At Julián's party Dani has several cocktails, is sick, and stays there for the night. The two spend

[40] 'Authenticity' is a fraught concept in the field of popular music studies, where it 'is generally connected with how certain forms of popular music have typically been regarded as real or genuine while other have not. […] Scholarship has largely avoided restin upon or reinforcing polarized notions of authentic and inauthentic popular music, regarding any claim to authenticity as primarily an ideological construction.' (Leonard and Strachan 2003, p. 164). Furthermore, 'authenticity' is a central concept for debates surrounding race and popular music. As Leonard and Strachan explain, '[v]arious African American musics […] have been read as musical forms in which common practises [*sic*] such as signifyin(g) and antiphony are seen as following a direct line from African oral traditions' (2003, p. 165). While these ideas carried in the film world by jazz and blues are clearly constructed and therefore debatable, assumptions about its 'authenticity' nonetheless haunt films featuring jazz, blues, and any other music genre bearing connections to African 'roots'.

the day after together, enjoy one another's company, and after returning to Julián's they kiss, hesitate, talk, kiss once more, and Dani seems serious about continuing, but stops and demands music, and interestingly specifies 'something that I like'. Julián quickly picks something, Dani says no, Julián tries something different, Dani says that is fine. That song is Paul Fustér's 'Montserrat'. Julián exits briefly, leaving Dani alone for a few seconds, and returns to find Dani is gone. 'Montserrat', which briefly continues after the cut to Nico lying awake in Dani's bed, obviously reminds Dani of Nico, and the piece's evocative power makes him realise where his heart belongs. However, 'Montserrat', a melancholic Buckley-esque track, is a rather odd choice for Julián, since nowhere in the film he surrounds himself with anything remotely like that song. Whether 'Montserrat' is heard on the radio or Julián is playing a record, cassette, or CD, is never visible. Still, Julián's involuntary or voluntary selection could taint his character's credibility to Dani's ears, precisely because a contemporary indie track could sound false in Julián's hands, perhaps an attempt to play down the generation gap between the two through projecting competence in the areas of popular culture the other one likes. The day after, Dani tells Julián he likes Western films and right after says he is also into Bergman, leaving Julián a bit surprised and perhaps unconvinced. However understated, their efforts to impress, perhaps to woo the other using his musical and cinematic taste might suggest the impossibility for romance between their different generations.

Therefore 'Montserrat' comes as a memento not only of Nico, but also of Dani's needs as a young gay man who wants to go after a dream despite knowing he will never reach it. Dani's realisation after hearing 'Montserrat' at Julián's house vaguely resembles the scene where Manu accepts the simulacrum his own father keeps up to conceal Rafa's heroin addiction in *Barrio*. Both Manu and Dani know nothing 'real' can occur further along, but while Manu did believe those stories about Rafa, Dani's musical simulacrum for his perfect teenage romance arrives already empty after Nico becomes distant and precludes any possibility for Dani's dream's realisation. The piece's quiet melancholic melodic lines and lyrical content already contain the impossibility suffocating Dani's hopes, but his insistent staring at Nico and his useless efforts to reverse Nico's evident lack of interest represent the way Dani fills the empty teenage homosexual romance simulacrum and makes their being friends suffice until the end. The ambiguous final scene may suggest Dani's light-

hearted outlook towards other romance opportunities surrounding him, but his walking towards the sea could offer a direr end, maybe a final off-screen suicide. The end credits music, another upbeat blues cue composed specially for the film, bridges the cut between the final shots showing Dani walking towards the water and the credits, which perhaps rules out hearing a final off-screen suicide and can suggest a new beginning instead, maybe a reconsideration about his sexuality. A third appearance of 'Montserrat' in lieu of blues, for example, would upset the otherwise hopeful closing scene. Whichever end one chooses using the audiovisual materials available, the meaning 'Montserrat' accrues through its two occurrences gives the piece a strange and complex connotation, which makes its evocative power trigger Dani's resolution to embrace an empty simulacrum and put friendship where he hoped romance would bloom, instead of abandoning it altogether.

Overall, several differences between the songs heard in *Krámpack* develop complex differences between one character and another, marking different generations, genders, and positions vis-à-vis heteronormative masculinity, homosociality, and, perhaps obliquely, national identity. The connections I suggest exist among the textual threads I mention above are articulated through songs in *Krámpack*, where homosexual characters and liberal heterosexuals happily coexist without the clashes other films, including *Historias del Kronen*, portray. Whereas in *Historias del Kronen* there is a tension between those embracing and those threatening heteronormative masculinity and *Barrio* similarly shows the tension between 'us' and 'them' being fuelled by simulacra of happier lives, *Krámpack* minimises conflicts because its protagonist finds himself without the cruel friends-enemies Roberto faces daily in the Cervecería Kronen nor the looming 'nowhere' Javi, Manu, and Rai pointlessly evade in *Barrio*. Dani's parents are not there, every adult character seems friendly and hands-off the way the other cinematic parents never are, and the other teenagers never tease nor castigate him for his sexuality. Nico never chastises Dani and their playful experiments never trigger violent rejection despite Nico not being gay. Julián never takes advantage of Dani and his reactions are never angry. Everybody behaves faultlessly and Dani finally experiences Nico's lack of interest but expresses his sexuality without a problem and never represses any impulse – so much so that he even interrupts Elena and Nico's intimacy by grabbing Nico's crotch as he kisses Elena at the house party.

The absence of unsympathetic behaviour is matched by another glaring absence: Spanish bands singing songs in Spanish. The association between the one piece performed in Spanish and the one heterosexual – if curious – male is no accident. *Krámpack*'s Catalan setting never emerges through traditional Catalan symbols, but there are a few Catalan bands featuring on the soundtrack, whose songs, quite interestingly, accompany Dani's tormented emotional adventure. All these bands, however, write songs in English. One would not necessarily see a Catalan indie act singing songs in English as being an overt expression of 'Catalanness'. On the contrary, singing in English could be crudely equated to accepting Anglo-American's popular music's hegemonic influence. However, I argue, writing songs in English could acquire a different connotation where singing in Catalan would place their music in the traditionally resistant Catalan nationalistic mould and writing songs in Spanish would label their music as acceptant of Spain's nationalising power. Paul Fustér overtly addresses the issue in a brief quote that features on the Catalan website www.clubcantautor.com. The six years US born Fustér has spent in the homeland of his parents are defined as 'Un temps suficient per formar-se un criteri contrari al "nacionalisme i l'hermetisme" del rock català: "Continuo sense entendre per què hi ha senyeres als concert"' (Enough time to form an opinion contrary to the "nationalism and the hermetism" of Catalan rock: "I still don't understand why there are flags at the concerts") (Fustér, quoted in Tarrés).[41] Their English songs, therefore, can place these Catalan indie bands somewhere 'neutral', since their songs are neither for nor against the Catalan nationalist culture, and can offer Dani a similar quality. Dani and his sympathetic friends inhabit a strangely 'neutral' seaside Catalonia where nothing seems stereotypically Catalan and yet the songs' failure to match these expectations through their music or linguistically can produce identifications which are 'above' either nation, somewhere different where a certain knowing cosmopolitanism supplants Catalan nationalism and traditional Spanish culture. The way all these 'foreign' songs accompany every character who lives outside traditional ideas about heteronormative masculinity and uncomplicated national identity might offer their diverse group a culture to share, and provide fluid identifications for all those men and women who, for whichever reasons, are not hearing their culture where similar monolithic identities prevail. Again, songs

[41] <http://www.clubcantautor.com/artistes/fuster/index.htm> [Accessed 17 March 2010].

uncover a subtext where audiences can negotiate their positioning vis-à-vis not only the surface identities the film overtly represents, but also those that are implied below the surface but nonetheless available. Different representations of gender, as Marsh and Nair (2004) suggest, and as I hope to have demonstrated, can provide a revealing entry point towards a wider understanding of representations of identities in films.

Conclusion

In the three films I analyse above music carries out different narrative functions. Among these, I chose to focus on the way songs offer complex identifications by mapping non-place-bound cultural divisions on place-bound identities. All three films use their compilation soundtracks to construct differences through which the inhabitants of their world and audiences alike negotiate their positions.

In *Historias del Kronen* songs painstakingly map the difficult relationship among its young men and women along the distinction between those who stand for the heteronormative masculinity Carlos and the other alpha males embrace, and those who challenge its supremacy. These surface divisions the music draws can evoke other differences that still persist in contemporary Spanish culture and uncover identities within the nation, revealing its traditional patriarchal face as well as the struggles its Others are facing. *Barrio*'s Latin American songs bring the simulacra of another world to Javi, Manu, and Rai, and accompany their hopeful moments, but, after these simulacra's emptiness becomes obvious, hip hop and rock songs in Spanish accompany their harsh reality instead and, through their brief positioning as gazers on another lower world represented by North-Africans and their music, the three underprivileged teenagers are audiovisually brought close to 'us'. Via those songs the three friends are taken somewhere outside their reach and abandoned there, briefly saved through awareness of their lower Other, and finally the distinction between 'us' and 'them' remains, but the crude audiovisual portrayal of a *barrio* on the margins of the sounds and images of Spain as seen on television puts poor, deprived families on the map, however problematic their lower Other's role in this is.

Finally, *Krámpack*'s songs reflect the different generations, genders, and stances vis-à-vis heteronormative masculinity through music of or inspired by an older or newer genre, the performer's gender, and the different languages in which the lyrics are delivered. Alongside the visuals, the songs construct positions ranging between subdued hostility against and general tolerance for homosexuality and foreignness. These positions, I argue, can offer identifications whereby these surface dichotomies carry ideas about the Spanish and Catalan nations, and Catalan bands singing in English can offer a means for expressing identities which are neither for nor against Catalan nationalism, but somewhere above these dichotomies.

Music plays a pivotal role in representing distinctions between different genders, sexualities, and classes, and can place a character inside or outside whichever culture, image, dream the music invokes for audiences. All three films display faint but visible connections between a character's positioning vis-à-vis these differences, which can produce wider associative universes surrounding the songs through which differences are articulated. Once we hear that Carlos's heteronormative masculinity sounds like Spanish hard rock and recognise how Roberto's songs alternate between introspective ballads in English and his playing along with the macho stereotypes through his traditionally masculine friends' music, those songs can offer identifications leading not only to Carlos's assertive heteronormative masculinity and Roberto's repressed homosexuality, but also towards identities which connect to these positions, which are sowed into *Historias del Kronen*'s narrative through the music marking its inhabitants apart. After whichever meaning one gives the Latin American music playing in *Barrio* has emerged and those songs start vanishing, rock songs and hip hop release a whole new associative dimension and, as I argue, these songs' visualisation can privilege one meaning, but the close correspondences between Latin American music and hopefulness, on the one hand, and between hip hop, rock and hopelessness, on the other, offer a clear message about the boys' prospects, and encourage identifications where audiences' ideas about these songs, their authors, their country, their genre, etc. can greatly influence their positioning towards a portion of Spanish society seldom visible – or audible – in the prevailing representations of Spanish national identity. Whether one detects the association between English-language songs and heteronormative masculinity's Other or knows about those bands' disengagement

towards Catalan nationalism, *Krámpack*'s music establishes homosexuality, relaxed attitudes towards sexuality and foreignness as the dominant norm in the film world, setting out the audiovisual materials for a strangely neutral portrayal where young and adult Catalan – and one foreign – men and women express their extraneous stances towards the heteronormative masculinity, and patriarchal, nationalistic values the old-fashioned Spanish nation stands for while eluding Catalonia's pervasive nationalism at the same time, and perhaps tempt audiences along.

The identities 1990s Spanish films portray are still being defined against a traditional Spain whose Francoist ghost often looms and sometimes still lives through the lingering impositions through which the country was moulded pre-1975. The films I chose reflect divisions whose divergent sides quite obviously stand for the divergent ideological stances the old oppressed Spain and the new liberated Spain represent. Other divisions, for example those among different classes and ethnicities, are perhaps the unavoidable by-product of Spain's quick and hurried evolution towards its new liberated national self – seen in *Barrio*'s news reports about the country's burgeoning economy and place on the European chessboard, which, however, leave Javi, Manu, and Rai's lives unaffected. While the distant unrepresented universes these later changes generated and their music are least known, *Barrio*'s music articulates their world through songs whose known origins bring a clearer perspective for diverse audiences, opening paths for different identifications. The three films I chose and the way I discuss their soundtracks begin to scratch a surface that still remains relatively unknown, but definitely needs further study and thought. The songs these films use can allow whole submerged associative universes to surface. If soundtracks' power to express complex meaning remains unheard, the different paths along which engagements between audiences and cinematic texts develop might never be fully charted.

CHAPTER FOUR

A Study of Popular Songs in Three Italian Films

Italian film music still remains relatively unexplored. A few eminent works about Italian film briefly mention the music (Sorlin 1996, Landy 2000, Bondanella 2001, Zagarrio 1998, Brunetta 2004, Wood 2005), acknowledging its paramount role in the creation of the film world. However, it is generally those films featuring scores by celebrity composers such as Nino Rota, Ennio Morricone, and the like that earn their few lines in the works of film scholars, usually in association with the one great director who revealed their music to the public ear – Federico Fellini and Sergio Leone respectively. On the other hand, in film music scholarship there are still relatively few exceptions to the silence that has characterised the study of the use of music – especially popular music – in Italian films.

Catherine O'Rawe opens her essay 'More more Moro: Music and montage in *Romanzo criminale*' (2009) by identifying this research void that is just recently beginning to be addressed:

> Research is just beginning on the function of the pop soundtrack in recent Italian cinema. For example, Emanuele D'Onofrio has investigated the role of pop music in politically committed cinema, such as *I cento passi* (Marco Tullio Giordana, 2000); there is much more to be said about how the soundtrack forms part of the middlebrow address of films such as *I cento passi*, *La meglio gioventù* (Giordana, 2003) and *Mio fratello è figlio unico* (Daniele Lucchetti, 2007), as well as the use of 'Toop Toop' by French electro-house duo Cassius to counterpoint a montage of murders, including that of Aldo Moro, in Paolo Sorrentino's recent biopic of Giulio Andreotti *Il divo* (2008).
>
> (O'Rawe 2009, pp. 214-5)

O'Rawe also signals a forthcoming essay by Pierpaolo Antonello where he 'briefly discusses the use of the soundtrack, including Massive Attack's 'Herculaneum', in Matteo Garrone's *Gomorra* (2008).'[42] (endnote 7, p. 223), but her account's brevity reminds readers about the kind of disregard the subject suffers at the time of writing. Her article gives a compelling reading of LaBelle's 'Lady Marmalade' in *Romanzo Criminale* (2008) in the montage featuring shots alternating TV footage showing

[42] See 'Dispatches from Hell: Gomorra', in *Mafia Movies: A Reader*, ed. by Dana Renga (University of Toronto Press, forthcoming).

different moments of Aldo Moro's abduction and a party scene involving members of the Banda della Magliana – a significant participant in the organised crime scene at the time when extremist terrorism was shaking the country.

O'Rawe's point that the interaction between sound track and image track in the 'Lady Marmalade' montage can suggest complicity between state and organised crime (p. 218) and her closing remarks about how LaBelle's pop hit can 'add eroticism and Otherness to the account of Moro, perhaps illustrating the lack of a specifically Italian soundtrack for this Italian national tragedy' (p. 222) challenge the obvious prejudice whereby popular songs' meaning in cinematic representations of a violent chapter of Italian history is often disregarded. Earlier she warns about how 'at a textual level, not just a cultural or intertextual one, it would be unwise […] to assume that just because the song is very popular and familiar, it does not contain any narrative information' (p. 217) and her final paragraph expressly calls for considering the pop soundtracks of Italian films:

> Ultimately, we need to be wary of the idea that the use of popular song or music is unable to offer a profound commentary on narrative – even when the narratives are thought to be gibberish, as in 'Lady Marmalade'. Susan McClary reminds us that 'music and its procedures operate as part of the political arena – not simply as one of its more trivial reflections'. Thus we can hope to open the way towards a more rigorous study of the relation between popular music and Italian cinema.
>
> (O'Rawe 2009, p. 222)

Her closing remarks, again, point towards the absence of substantial scholarly writing about Italian pop soundtracks. Besides Emanuele D'Onofrio's article entitled 'Italian Cinema Revisits the 1970s: Film Music and Youth Identity in De Maria's *Paz*' (2007), his doctoral thesis on Italian film music and national identity (2008), and his essay 'Percorsi di Identitià Narrativa nella Memoria Difficile: La Musica in *I cento passi* e *Buongiorno, notte*' (2010), there are few other significant contributions on the subject. Among the few authors who address the soundtracks in their writing about 1990s Italian films, the disregard for the growing use of popular songs in the film music practices of contemporary Italian cinema remains. Laura Rascaroli (2004) briefly describes *Caro Diario*'s (*Dear Diary*, 1993) 'ethnically eclectic soundtrack' (p. 236) and Nanni Moretti's 'explicit fascination for pop songs' (p. 239), but does not venture any further, while Dave Beech (2005) focuses on the lyrics of Leonard

Cohen's 'I'm Your Man' in *Caro Diario*, but does not bring the music into his analysis.

Among the literature about earlier films, however, Richard Dyer's work on Italian film music positions him as a key voice in the growing landscape of film music scholarship. In the chapter he contributed to *European Film Music* (2006), Dyer gives a fascinating perspective on the music present in neo-realist films. He states that 'Popular music in neo-realism includes songs clearly presented by the film as part of current cultural production […] Equally common are Latin American and, above all, swing styles. Pop music is nearly always associated with corruption.' (p. 32). Among the instances of popular music in neo-realism mentioned by Dyer are popular songs 'Fiorin Fiorello' and 'Piccolino Come Te' in *Ossessione* (*Obsession*, 1942), swing in *Il Cammino della Speranza* (*Path of Hope* or *The Road to Hope*, 1950), swing and Latin American music in *Senza Pietà* (*Without Pity*, 1948), *Tombolo Paradiso Nero* (*Tombolo Black Paradise*, 1947), Latin American music in *Sotto il Sole di Roma* (*Under the Sun of Rome*, 1947) and *Roma Città Aperta* (*Rome Open City*, 1945), boogie-woogie in *Proibito Rubare* (*No Stealing* or *Hey Boy*, 1948), and, in the words of a character, 'an American station playing jazz' in *Roma Città Aperta* (p. 32-3). There are several instances where the popular songs Dyer describes are not Italian. Foreign popular music seems a preferred musical means for the delineation of threats, in a way quite similar to those foreign – often American – popular songs in the Spanish films I refer to in Chapter Three. In the following pages I will explore how foreign popular music becomes established as the musical signifier of threats to masculinity in Carlo Verdone's *Sono pazzo di Iris Blond*, defines a group of young friends resisting prearranged adult choices in Enza Negroni's *Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo*, and accompanies three young men who appropriate Anglo-American popular music as the vehicle for their differentiation in the small Emilian town of Correggio in Luciano Ligabue's *Radiofreccia*. Which surface culture certain popular songs 'play' in these films and where music positions its members, I will argue, can alternatively construct a culture as present or unavailable in the cinematic landscape of contemporary Italy.

Sono pazzo di Iris Blond

Such a bad girl

Carlo Verdone's 1995 film marks the umpteenth success for a major protagonist of Italian cinema. Verdone spent the 1990s consolidating his style, still playing leading roles in the films he makes, just as when he started directing and co-writing in the early 1980s,[43] and has now solidly conquered a prominent place in Italian film history. In 2003 eminent Italian cinema historian Gian Piero Brunetta defined the early Verdone as 'the spiritual leader of a group of comedians who got their start on television (Benigni, Pozzetto, Troisi, and Nuti)' ([2003] 2009, p. 293) and lists *Sono pazzo di Iris Blond* (1996) 'among his most memorable films' (p. 294). The picture, title and subheading on the publicity poster offer clear clues about the gender dynamics between Romeo (Carlo Verdone) – the subject in the title – and Iris Blond (Claudia Gerini). The ominous 'Lui le cambia la vita, lei gliela distrugge…' (He changes her life, she destroys his…) appears below the title. Below, the image shows Romeo rolling his eyes in a typically Italian hand-on-forehead gesture of concern in the foreground, and Iris confidently looking ahead in the background, but positioned a bit higher. The picture and the words present on the poster introduce Iris as the influential character whose actions drive the story forward – a theme I will explore in the following pages. But what about Romeo?

Despite being the subject in the title – *he* is crazy about Iris Blond, as we learn later – his passivity in the film becomes quite obvious in the opening scene. After finding out about the ongoing clandestine romance between his partner and fellow member of Alta Definizione, and a man who also plays in the band, Romeo is shown sitting in front of the two betrayers who are off frame but aurally present through their incessant talking about the odd circumstances, leaving him without the opportunity to speak. His cigarette lighter quickly becomes established as a symbol of Romeo's endearing inability to control things around him and steer his existence forward as he fails to light a cigarette. His partner's lover hands him a light and later lends him his lighter after Romeo's attempt to destroy a picture depicting him and his now ex-partner fails. As the picture burns, a track featuring a tenor saxophone repeats similar melodic lines a few times as a quiet drums-keyboards section keeps

[43] <http://www.carloverdone.it/page.asp> [Accessed 29 July 2010].

running in the background. The music continues while Romeo packs up musical equipment and posters showing him at the zenith of his success, generally looking forlorn. The saxophone's melodic gesture may represent the narrative impasse Romeo reaches again and again through the story whereby, after a hopeful new beginning, failure follows shortly. But later a Neapolitan clairvoyant tells him a foreign woman who has the name of a flower and sings is about to bring significant changes. As the old woman talks about his destiny, Romeo's attempt to light a cigarette is immediately stopped as the clairvoyant's assistant briskly chastises him and tells him there is no smoking in front of *'a santa* (the saint, as the clairvoyant is known as). The way smoking is precluded for Romeo in a scene where he gives up narrative control by turning to a strange woman to learn about his destiny strengthens the links between his ability to light a cigarette and his ability to steer his existence.

The clairvoyant's words are heard after the cut to a cruise ship leaving the harbour. Romeo, who has been working as a pianist onboard ships for a while after the breakup shown in the opening scene, is playing Stevie Wonder's 'I Just Called To Say I Love You' at the grand piano in the dance salon as a woman who has been staring at him, despite other men's attention, walks towards the piano and compliments him profusely about his touch. Her name is Marguerite (Andréa Ferréol) and, after she reveals her passion for singing and her Belgian nationality, Romeo finally manages to light up a cigarette without borrowing a lighter or being reprimanded – a gesture that indicates his temporary independence from externally derived momentum. Later the lighter returns as a signifier of control after the first fateful encounter between Romeo and Iris at the fast food restaurant where she works. His novelty cigarette lighter in the shape of a train catches her attention and she convinces Romeo to give it to her. Iris's seemingly innocuous request is naively satisfied by Romeo, whose gesture marks his instant falling under Iris's spell. Romeo never manages to light a cigarette using his own lighter again and, interestingly, Iris is finally shown leaving Romeo by train shortly after she gives him a light using his train-shaped lighter. While a functioning cigarette lighter marks the few moments where Romeo seems to be heading towards happy times, the occasions where his lighter fails him symbolise his general passivity, and the train becomes a shorthand for Iris's turbulent arrival and departure.

The other interesting element recurring through every fateful encounter that changes Romeo's existence seems to be influential, often assertive and charismatic women who are responsible for pushing forward the narrative – and Romeo's otherwise uncertain journey through life. His initial partner, the clairvoyant, and the two women named after flowers who, as *'a santa* had predicted, enter Romeo's world: all these women bring about big changes while Romeo keeps going along and deludes himself, believing the clairvoyant's words, going from being under one woman's control to falling under another one's spell, and generally following the choices his current partner makes for him. But right after the clairvoyant tells him she can see a woman who sings, involvement in his musical career quickly emerges as another element all his women share. The first one remains outside the frame through the whole scene, but her trembling voice reveals the truth about her and the other man in the band, depriving Romeo not only of a lover, but also of a musical partner – which, given the situation, means his role in Alta Definizione becomes unsustainable. While the first woman never plays nor sings, the other two are largely defined through their singing, and, in the case of Iris, through the songs she and Romeo write as Iris Blond and The Freezer. Interestingly, the songs these assertive women perform and write are never in Italian.

The trope whereby women perform songs exclusively in foreign languages calls for further attention. Quoting Claudia Gorbman's *Unheard Melodies* (1987), Adrienne McLean (1993) opens her article about film noir and musical women defying the assumptions that 'When a character in a dramatic film sings a song […] "significant action" is deferred because the narrative "freezes for the duration of the song."' (p. 3). Challenging these assumptions through a careful examination of Rita Hayworth's musical numbers in *Gilda* (1946) and *Affair in Trinidad* (1952), she shows how 'the musical number not only causes narrative rupture but, by so doing, may provide a place where very significant "action" can occur. […] Even Mulvey notes that the "sexual impact of the performing woman [can take a] film into a no-man's-land outside its own time and space"' (p. 3). Perhaps Marguerite and Iris never deliver a performance whose circumstances shake the narrative the way McLean describes, but I will elaborate on the reasons for their inability to do so later, when I analyse the sequences where Marguerite and Iris are shown singing. For now

I would like to reflect on the convergence between singing women and foreign songs.

Non-Italian popular music in Italian films still remains largely disregarded and instances where foreign popular songs are discussed never mention their being related to females. In the introductory section to this chapter, I mentioned Dyer's remarks about foreign popular music and corruption, which, while not specifically focused on women, refer to interesting instances in which non-Italian popular music accompanies various, perceived threats. Danielle Hipkins's essay, 'Why Italian Film Studies Needs a Second Take on Gender' (2008), never addresses music overtly, but gives a fascinating description of 'Silvana Mangano's show-stopping initial appearance in *Riso amaro* [which,] as the camera follows a series of captivated male gazes up her legs and torso to her face as she gyrates to the catchy melody of the boogie-woogie, presents a textbook example of the way in which traditional film narrates the male gaze.' (p. 216) While Silvana Mangano's character, Silvana, may deserve a boogie-woogie for her involvement in criminal activities, the association between a strong female and foreign music may point towards a further connotation non-Italian music may carry, one which I can only begin to explore through Marguerite and Iris in the present chapter. The way Iris and other troublesome cinematic females are quite often given non-Italian soundtracks, I will argue, articulates the potential threats their character poses and can point towards their non-belonging to a culture where assertive women are still largely 'unwelcome' and chronically under-represented. Their non-Italian-language songs project 'foreignness' on to the ideas these women represent and, as I will argue later, while their singing can cause narrative rupture and place narrative power temporarily in their hands, defying their fetishisation and threatening a traditionally masculine territory, music often turns against their character and becomes the vehicle for their final removal. Conversely, Romeo suffers professionally and existentially through the whole story, but after Iris finally loses her narrative power and her charm fades, his character regains credibility through his swift reappropriation of their songs, exiting the vicious circle whereby every breakup leads towards a necessary musical reinvention. In fact, the perpetual juxtaposition between Romeo's private and working lives means similar scenarios occur again and again, leaving his musical career at the mercy of his sentimental ups and downs.

The first lucky encounter after his clairvoyant's appointment happens as Romeo's career stagnates – another problem the clairvoyant had predicted would improve drastically. While the scene where Romeo meets the first woman, Marguerite, shows a seemingly promising beginning between the two, the music gives significant clues about their differences and could represent a premonition of trouble ahead. Perhaps hearing his performance in the context of his piano bar job as the unadulterated manifestation of Romeo's musical taste is problematic, but his later remarks about wanting to 'rejuvenate the repertoire' after playing Jacques Brel's songs alongside Marguerite night after night, and perhaps incorporating, among other suggestions, some Stevie Wonder numbers, make such an interpretation much less unlikely. The night Marguerite accosts him, Romeo is playing an instrumental version of Stevie Wonder's 'I Just Called To Say I Love You' on the grand piano. As she reveals her name is Marguerite, fulfilling all the characteristics *'a santa* had predicted, she tells him about her passion for singing Jacques Brel's songs, and her request for 'Ne Me Quitte Pas' results in their first joint performance of Brel's classic piece.

Their first performance continues and bridges the cut between the piano bar on the cruise ship and a dark club in the heart of Brussels where, six months later, the two are painfully going through their umpteenth performance of the same old song, wearing black turtleneck jumpers to imitate the existentialists Marguerite greatly admires. The ensuing quarrel between Marguerite and Romeo reveals his frustration about their shows and his exact words are worth quoting: 'Io non ti dico di fare David Bowie, non ti dico nemmeno di fare George Michael, e non ti dico nemmeno di fare Alanis Morissette che manco sai chi sono, però dico cerchiamo un attimo di ringiovanire il repertorio, basterebbe un 'Yesterday', un 'New York, New York', uno Stevie Wonder, tiè!' ('I'm not saying we should do David Bowie, I'm not even saying we should do George Michael, and I'm not even saying we should do Alanis Morissette, because you don't even know who they are, but I'm saying let's try to rejuvenate the repertoire a bit, a 'Yesterday', a 'New York, New York', a Stevie Wonder song would be enough, there you go!'). Marguerite challengingly replies 'Why, do you think I wouldn't be capable of that?' and proceeds to remove her raincoat and start singing Queen's 'The Show Must Go On' in the middle of the street. Her awkward performance of a piece obviously outside her stylistic range

draws equally awkward looks among the few passersby, proving Romeo's point and now clearly revealing their growing incompatibility. Romeo, visibly embarrassed, stops her and keeps walking, pulling her along, but after she demands a kiss the whole night takes a turn for the worse and their tired relationship shows its damaged state. Their journey continues between recrimination and revenge, and after Marguerite sabotages his plans for cooking pasta, reminding Romeo about their dieting resolutions, he manages to avoid plain yoghurt by using dog walking as a pretext to leave their apartment and consume forbidden fast food at the nearest branch of Quick.[44]

The musical divergences expressed in the scene I outline above deserve further attention. Marguerite's single-minded obsession for Jacques Brel and Romeo's longing for a wider musical genre range diverge on the following: chronological periods, artists' positions within the popular music canon, and, quite significantly, different languages the singers use and national cultures their songs represent. Firstly, 'Ne Me Quitte Pas', the artists that Romeo assumes Marguerite has not heard about, and his final suggestions for popular music 'standards' and great artists, all represent different chronological periods. While her hobby horse is a 1959 classic chanson by a long-dead 'poet' (as Marguerite herself defines Brel), David Bowie, George Michael, and Alanis Morissette are all pop stars active during the 1990s who started their careers in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s respectively, and the remaining three suggestions lie somewhere halfway between the two opposites, including songs and artists whose periods range from the mid-1960s (The Beatles' 'Yesterday'), to the late-1970s (Liza Minnelli's 'New York, New York') and, potentially, their cinematic present (Stevie Wonder started out in the 1960s, was still releasing records through the 1990s). Furthermore, at the time when the story takes place The Beatles, Liza Minnelli, and Stevie Wonder had already enjoyed international stardom for several years, and both Stevie Wonder's hits and the two songs Romeo names had been covered by other artists, which I believe positions these figures in a precise point of popular music's canon.

While the music these latter artists have made famous belongs in a popular canon of superstardom sealed by homage by other artists who covered their songs, Morissette, Michael, and – despite his artistic longevity – David Bowie are not

[44] A popular Belgian fast-food joint.

comparably 'covered and revered' superstars in the mid-1990s. All the singers and songs Romeo names are post-Brel and are all known songs and artists who reached prominence in the heavily mass-mediated landscape that allowed Anglo-American popular music to conquer audiences worldwide roughly since the 1950s. 'Yesterday', 'New York, New York', Stevie Wonder, *and* Jacques Brel may all boast canonised auras. However, 'Ne Me Quitte Pas' still remains different, clearly for its genre and heartbreaking theme, but perhaps chiefly because its roots are perceived to be in the Francophone cabaret clubs and music halls tradition, therefore seemingly outside the mass-media intensive popular music realm where the songs and artists Romeo likes originate and exist, which gives Brel's songs the 'authentic' quality all the other music lacks in the ears of Marguerite. Finally, Jacques Brel was Belgian and largely wrote and sang in French, while Romeo's suggestions are all Anglo-American artists singing in English. Romeo tries to reach towards Marguerite's taste, looking for something halfway between her and his musical preferences, proposing canonised songs and artists who sit somewhere between Jacques Brel on one side, and Alanis Morrissette, George Michael, and David Bowie on the other side. Marguerite tries to tread on common ground selecting Queen's 'The Show Must Go On' – something in English, but nonetheless by another performer (Freddie Mercury) who, like Brel, was already long dead and deified at the time of the film's release. First his and later her efforts are fruitless, and their musical taste divergences articulates their wider incompatibilities.

All these reflections about the different historical periods, positions vis-à-vis the popular music canon, and languages these songs represent point towards something broader. How the first influential woman Romeo finds along the way is defined through music is quite interesting. Marguerite's extraordinary vocal qualities are amply displayed, and her general behaviour indicates her assertive personality, but the scene where she defiantly sings Queen's 'The Show Must Go On' utterly ridicules her. Music first makes her character the fascinating woman Romeo falls for and, shortly after, her performance outside her genre territory dissolves all her charm. Right after singing a piece whose lyrical content hints at the deteriorating musical and emotional liaison between her and Romeo,[45] Marguerite's begging for kisses causes Romeo embarrassment, and his immediate comment, 'Non fare la bambina'

[45] 'Inside my heart is breaking, my make-up may be flaking, but my smile still stays on'.

(Don't be a child), seals his disdain for her and exposes her fragility, undermining the charismatic woman she initially seems. The music becomes the chief vehicle through which Romeo and Marguerite perform and express their discordant identities. After his initial rendition of a Stevie Wonder classic, she entices him towards her world where she repeats her performance of 'Ne Me Quitte Pas' ad nauseam until he reveals dissatisfaction, tries to reconcile their different repertoires halfway, and she accepts the challenge but fails.

Marguerite's musical *faux pas* and her subsequent childlike behaviour undermine the charismatic persona she had initially projected, showing her voluble temperament, but her dubious performance and ensuing authoritarian behaviour paint her as the bad one while Romeo's laissez-faire personality, despite his general dissatisfaction, never emerges as the problem between the two. Musically and behaviourally Marguerite takes all the blame, while Romeo comes out untainted and earns empathy despite his chronic inability to make decisions for himself. Earlier her vocal prowess creates Marguerite's character, makes her the charismatic performer who shows talents Romeo lacks, and a woman weeping among the crowd where everybody claps excitedly upholds Marguerite's image as a brilliant performer through the internal audience's visible and audible emotional involvement. Her monotonous repertoire already undermines her charm since, however remarkable her every performance appears to be, she sings nothing but Jacques Brel. However, the one wrong performance she gives outside the genre she knows nullifies her earlier efforts and exposes her musical and 'womanly' limitations. After she sings badly and shows her frailties, her character totally loses all her charm.

Immediately after Marguerite's swift demise, another woman who sings arrives and turns Romeo's world around. Her character, as I will explore, is articulated through music that marks her and Marguerite apart but, again, progressively undercuts the confident and assertive woman she initially seems to be. Iris is a beautiful Italian young woman who has lived outside Italy for ten years and can speak perfect French, behaves confidently and has several suitors. She first meets Romeo in the Quick where she works after he escapes Marguerite's gastronomic tyranny on the night their quarrel unfolds. Her first words are a reprimand for Romeo, who had shouted his order while chewing his food. After putting beer, chips and bread rolls on the table, she sarcastically guesses 'Italiano?' and justifies her

intuition through observing his typical habit of eating potatoes with bread rolls and never saying please. She stays angry for another few minutes, tells him how a little kindness after eight hours serving customers helps her not to tell everybody to 'fuck off', but turns nicer after she feels the message has got through, and later joins Romeo at the table. She tries his dessert, takes a cigarette, and notices his lighter. In the first twenty-four hours after their first encounter, she dumps someone on the phone, another man parks his Porsche outside her workplace and waits for her, and the following morning a third man, who directs the choir she sings in, makes a jealous scene in the middle of a rehearsal after he sees Romeo waiting for her holding a bunch of blue irises. At the fast-food restaurant, Romeo notices her name badge and, the following day, finds out she sings. All these signs nurture his hopeful feeling about Iris, but her character quickly becomes established as the dangerous woman, outspoken, getting all she wants and leaving a different man every day.

Her first singing performance hints towards the threats lying below the surface. After looking for her at the Quick where she works the day after their first encounter, Romeo finds out where her choir rehearsal takes place and arrives at the fictional 'cathédrale de Saint Victoire' in the middle of a musical piece. Iris opens the following piece, the 'Hallelujah' as the director introduces it, and the shot reverse shot between her singing and him directing changes to a shot reverse shot between her still singing and Romeo's adoring stare as the other man notices him. Her teasing stare under the angelic *façade*, and the way her image and the music combine to produce a semblance of innocence, are a perfect audiovisual shorthand for a character whose choices, musical and otherwise, later undermine her initial likeability.

The ambiguity her character gains through the songs she sings, can undermine potential identifications with Iris, leaving the perceiver wondering whether the promising assertive woman she catches a hopeful glimpse of at the beginning was a hallucination. Iris's assertiveness remains, but her character often veers towards being domineering and calculating, above all towards Romeo, which alone could deter audiences who perhaps initially see her as the strong female who can steal the limelight. However, as the subheading warns, Iris's devastating influence over Romeo plays against her character, and her childlike and often nasty behaviour – carefully displayed through the visuals and her lines – sheds a bad light

on Iris as had happened earlier to Marguerite, which can deter significant identifications for audiences who are initially drawn towards her. Her character never becomes unequivocally likeable and yet Iris maintains her overall control on the narrative development, retains a certain charm despite her wrongdoings and, after she takes Romeo's cigarette lighter, their lives are closely intertwined until her departure. But her choices and actions alone are not a justification for her demise, and the swift beginning of a musical partnership between Romeo and Iris becomes a significant arena for their development and fight for success. The entry in the Italian dictionary of films *il* Morandini describes *Sono pazzo di Iris Blond* as a 'commedia sentimentale in cui la musica […] è una componente trainante dell'azione.' (romantic comedy where the music is a driving component of the action) and continues 'Il film appartiene soprattutto a C. Gerini che infatti trionfa: il capocomico si è messo al servizio di un'attrice'.[46] (The film belongs above all to C. Gerini, who in fact triumphs: the chief comedian has put himself at the service of an actress). While these remarks are about Gerini's distinction as actress vis-à-vis Verdone as actor in the film, these words could be applied to the character of Iris herself, who, despite her problematic behaviour, dominates the narrative, often through music, and generally has Romeo under her thumb. She may finally triumph, but Iris travels towards her success at the expense of Romeo and her character becomes the 'bad' one. Considering how music defines Iris and Romeo in the context of their collaboration can perhaps allow further understanding of these two complex figures and their ambiguity.

The morning after their first encounter, Romeo meets Iris at the cathedral where her choir rehearses, the director teases her about her singing, she makes a scene, walks off, and she and Romeo spend the day together. After his odd questions about whether Iris likes poetry, she reveals her passion for writing poems and reads him a short one she wrote in Italian about someone she saw while working. Romeo likes her style and, after a few questions about her other poems, tells her about his job and makes her a proposition for a recording session in the studio. Later she calls Romeo and reads another two short poems on the telephone, one, written in French, about a tormented passion and the other, written in Italian, about sex, which Romeo deems a little too risqué. Iris quickly becomes impatient and rejects his censorial

[46] <http://trovacinema.repubblica.it/film/sono-pazzo-di-iris-blond/132144> [Accessed 29 June 2010].

attempt, but Romeo backtracks, proposing an adapted version in English, and quickly finds a justification for his suggestions, telling her how English is a much more musical language, a much more permissive language, etc.

His remarks about languages bear further consideration. Romeo first dissuades Iris from singing in Italian and later in the studio Iris takes his point about French being too 'soft' and accepts English. While Romeo justifies his ideas about these languages using vague musical grounds, his intention appears quite clear. His justification follows a concern about whether the encounter Iris's poem narrates is autobiographical and her admission worries Romeo. If there is nothing he can do about Iris's promiscuous lifestyle he can, however, attempt to contain expressions of Iris's sexuality through their songs – or at least so he seems to believe. His suggestions conceal a broader issue. Romeo's all-too-obvious crush on Iris, which she skilfully holds in check by getting Romeo to agree to never sleep with her to protect their musical partnership, makes him perform a quasi-paternal role to prevent Iris's sexuality being exposed. Earlier, in the square outside the cathedral, she takes off the white shirt she was wearing at the choir rehearsal, revealing a see-through top, and Romeo swiftly joins his hands, in an awkward attempt to cover Iris's breasts as passers-by stare. Romeo's behaviour shows a clear patriarchal concern about enclosing the woman he desires and not letting her exuberant sexuality be seen or heard by other men. Romeo is not censoring her *tout court*, but since using English can limit Iris's explicit lyrics getting through to other potentially threatening males, his suggestions, I would argue, do in fact represent an attempt to contain Iris's sexuality.

Another interesting element of their musical collaboration is their respective roles. Romeo positions himself as the instrumentalist and offers her to be the singer – a 'classic' sharing of musical roles in the history of popular music[47] where men use various technological tools while women use their 'natural' tools, their voice for producing sound and their looks for the spectacle. Iris never interests herself in

[47] See, for example, Ike and Tina Turner in the 1960s, Sonny and Cher in the 1970s, Eurythmics in the 1980s, Everything But The Girl in the 1990s, Crystal Castles in the 2000s. All these bands are different embodiments of a recurring pattern of role sharing where women, in spite of their challenging takes on the roles available to them as the singing woman in the duo, are often still never playing instruments. The way the odd exception, for example The White Stripes' Meg White on drums, often becomes dismissed in the music press perhaps indicates how upsetting these unwritten pop rules still remains taboo and generates disapproval among the males in the music criticism establishment.

playing Romeo's keyboards nor other instruments, and the possibility of Iris playing something while singing seems never to occur to Romeo. However, while these rules are respected, Iris insists and overturns another accepted rule about the order of their new stage names. Unlike Ike and Tina, and Sonny and Cher, their duo becomes Iris Blond and The Freezer on the express request of Iris because, as she states, putting The Freezer after 'sounds better'.

Their first recording session in the studio begins with Iris singing something she wrote in French and realising Romeo was right about using English, but the differences between the first performance in French and the English version point towards other interesting aspects of their newborn collaboration. On the English version, Romeo further manipulates her vocal performance of 'Nervous' through sound effects, which makes her natural pitch sound lower, producing a strange sound reminiscent of records playing at a lower speed. The artificiality the sound effects cause, alongside her imprecise pronunciation and odd affectation, makes her revised performance quite undignified if we compare it to Iris's first attempt in French without any sound effects or, even more so, if we think about her singing at the choir rehearsal earlier. Romeo's request for a tense and yet sensual rendition perhaps contributes to Iris's awkward and confusing performance, but the other songs she sings later confirm how the significant vocal prowess shown at the beginning remains contained and partially returns on the few occasions where Iris sings other songs. Interestingly, on these few occasions, as I will discuss later, she takes narrative control.

One night Romeo finally leaves Marguerite after a violent quarrel and moves in with Iris, who had offered him the opportunity to stay at her place. Romeo's hopes are shattered after she tells him she has a man waiting for her in the bedroom, and his first night there is spent on the sofa, where he hears everything. The following day Iris quits her job, decides their new musical collaboration means she and Romeo are now inseparable and will spend all day working, and finally makes him swear their partnership is about music and sex is necessarily forbidden. Later, however, she keeps teasing Romeo and never satisfies his obvious desires for her until she has secured a record contract for herself, which results in the breakup of Iris Blond and The Freezer as well as Iris and Romeo.

Another rehearsal takes place the day after his arrival at the house the two now share. She sings 'Blonder by the Second', a piece about a woman sitting in the hairdresser's salon, getting blonder by the second (hence the title) and wondering whether the man who loved her ever misses her like she does him. She keeps jumping around the house, first wearing leopard-print sunglasses, mimicking a strip tease, dancing provocatively and, as the chorus starts, she jumps on the sofa Romeo slept on, steps on his pyjamas, and mocks him for getting upset. Squeaky effects on the keyboards, which underline the absurdity of Iris's behaviour, accompany her quasi-comic performance and two posters on the walls strangely clash with the ludicrous lyrical content of 'Blonder by the Second'. The cover for The Velvet Underground and Nico's eponymous album (1967) clearly appears as Iris sings the verse, and the black and white photo showing Patti Smith on the cover of *Horses* (1975) is hanging on the wall in the background as Iris spasmodically jumps on the sofa. The two posters visible in the scene produce a strange inconsistency between these revered, controversial icons of rock and Iris's laughable performance, heightening its ludicrousness and perhaps emphasising the contradictory sides Iris shows through the story, as a woman who sings a pop ditty about being blond while doing a childlike and yet provocative dance but has posters of a notoriously androgynous feminist icon and a band that featured Nico, whose low enigmatic voice was a distinctive feature on The Velvet Underground's debut album. However, these contrasting ingredients are not a straightforward attempt at emphasising how ludicrous the character's performance looks and how shallow her songs sound, and could be given several different interpretations depending on whether a perceiver likes Iris. For someone who likes her those posters could represent the aurally unmatched signifier of Iris's hip musical taste and suggest reading her performance as parodic of certain inane pop where vacuity is compensated for through image, while for someone who finds her character objectionable their appearance could highlight her 'inauthentic' pop performance and point towards her attempt to project those bands' 'authentic' auras on to herself, purposely placing their image on the walls to acquire credibility.

However one reads this strange audiovisual combination, its contrasting aspects, I would argue, represent the confusing signals Iris's character sends out and highlight her contradictory personality, a trait that emerges quite often in the film.

Iris never sings or plays Patti Smith's or The Velvet Underground and Nico's songs, which can undermine the evocative power the posters possess,[48] but she never sings nor plays any songs other than the Iris Blond and The Freezer originals she and Romeo wrote, which again could allow for different interpretations. The way Iris is only ever seen singing or putting on their songs could be taken to signify egocentrism on her part, or a conscious attempt to control her individuality, which would be diluted by using other bands' songs. Furthermore, Gerini herself performed all the songs Iris sings, which overall can add further credibility to Iris's character, while the one piece Romeo's character sings at the end was performed by singer-songwriter Andrea Chimenti, and not Verdone. Interestingly, despite Chimenti not being a known performer, the audible timbral differences between his voice and Verdone's voice uncover the dubbing quite obviously, but the long shot makes any synchronisation discrepancies invisible, whereas these discrepancies are clearly visible in the sequences where Gerini's vocal performance and Iris's lip movements are badly synched. Whichever way one takes the musical choices Iris makes, these are a fundamental element for understanding how identifications surrounding her can vacillate, how her songs finally build her contradictory and fascinating character, which culture she can voice, and how assertive women negotiate their place in the film world.

After 'Blonder by the Second', a cut bridges the whole day until the evening and another, quite different track, is heard as the camera reveals Iris singing about troubled love in the bathtub. Her vocal performance changes significantly between these two first songs. Her voice now has a sinuous quality, reminiscent of Everything But The Girl's Tracey Thorn, and the piece makes her explore a lower register, producing a radically different final outcome. The lyrical content differs greatly too. 'Like Angels Do' is about longing for a loved one and there are several allusions to physicality, which marks a significant difference between the two songs. There are dim candles, and quiet synthesised rhythms and light minimal harmonies accompany the vocal parts, which marks a further differentiation between the two sequences.

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[48] Tim McNelis discussed a similar discrepancy in *Juno* (2007) between the bands the protagonist likes – whose album artwork strangely appears between shots – and the songs she listens to in the research seminar 'Guitar Girls: Identity, Popular Music, and Performance in Contemporary U.S. Teen Films', presented at the School of Music, University of Liverpool, 25 November 2008.

The discrepancies between these two initial rehearsal sequences offer a confusing audiovisual picture of Iris, and her character keeps oscillating between being portrayed as increasingly confident and at the same time knowingly unethical. The songs she sings and the new stage persona she chooses drive these changes, using known popular music codes whose meaning for the character, as I will elaborate, implies a subtext whereby, once again, the woman who threatens the patriarchal order becomes defused through her musical and ethical slips, and defined through her foreignness – in the case of Iris her story as a long-term resident of another country who becomes a popstar singing in English contributes to framing her character outside 1990s Italy despite her nationality. Iris is a young and beautiful femme fatale, a threatening woman for fragile Romeo, who swiftly falls under her spell. Iris is defined through writing and performing songs in English, whereas the possibility of writing or singing in Italian remains unavailable.

The English-language songs contain her threatening character, emphasise her foreignness, and situate her outside the dominant national culture where her roots are. Furthermore, as Iris sings their songs, sometimes getting close to pushing the film into the 'no-man's-land' Mulvey (1975) describes and potentially achieving 'the performer/audience unity fostered by song' that McLean talks about (1993, p. 4), these threatening moments are defused through her musical slips and other wrongdoings, and disrupted through other devices that McLean discusses. Using Orson Welles's *The Lady from Shanghai* (1947) as an example, McLean names two means whereby directors nullify these moments in which songs can rupture the narrative and allow for close identifications between audiences and singing women:

> First, he flattens the singer, the teller, that we would identify with into an almost motionless platinum surface "pinned" to a boat deck. Second, he keeps cutting back to narrative action and dialogue during the singing, which fades in and out as a consequence. We may well identify more with Elsa Bannister while she sings "Please Don't Kiss Me" than at any other time in the film, but the narrative's intervention in the song, as well as the extreme objectification and fetishization of the song's teller, reinforces rather than overcomes her narratively inscribed inscrutability.
>
> (McLean 1993, pp. 4-5)

The way these moments are disturbed in *Sono pazzo di Iris Blond* differs quite a lot but often takes similar paths.

Far from being flattened and still, Iris often keeps dancing sensually and sometimes quite frantically for the whole performance, which can produce similarly ruinous effects to Elsa's dollish stillness in the scene that McLean describes. The few interruptions occurring in the singing numbers where Iris shows her vocal talents, are her own doing. While she sings 'Like Angels Do' in the bathtub – a scene where her objectification and fetishisation are quite obvious – she stops, tells Romeo she has thought of two new lines, and blows a raspberry into the microphone. Her childlike behaviour crushes the spell she had created through her first serious performance. However, later the *mise-en-scène* undercuts her performance alongside her stage affectation.

When Iris sings 'Such A Bad Girl' her sensual performance is visually disrupted by several cuts to Romeo playing the keyboards, and later still, when she sings 'Spider's Web', the stage appears faraway in a long shot, showing two music businessmen in the foreground while Iris and Romeo are blurred in the background. There, too, her frantic dancing and provocative moves often verge on the parodic and, alongside her crooked pronunciation, further disrupt these moments where her singing works towards encouraging close identifications. However, the sequences where Iris sings on stage feature editing choices similar to Elsa Bannister's audiovisual treatment in *The Lady from Shanghai*, which disrupt her potential narrative power in the moments where she becomes the teller through her songs. Her singing numbers are never interrupted by another character and her gig outfits are never excessively revealing – and sometimes vaguely mannish – but the odd cut, other digressions in the visuals, and her few dubious moves conspire to undermine the charm she erratically possesses while singing their songs.

Furthermore, her character is necessarily tainted by various wrongdoings – a narrative trick that not only makes her the scapegoat in the sad finale, but also appears to clear Romeo of guilt after Iris has seduced and abandoned him. Her unethical behaviour and the association between her character and singing in languages other than Italian go hand in hand in a film where all these narrative factors portray the two defiant females as a 'foreign', irregular concept, further tainted by their childlike whims and dubious demeanour. After their musical partnership is sealed, Romeo's cigarette lighter fails him and she gives him a light – a clear warning that Iris will control his existence – and, after arguing for putting Iris

Blond before The Freezer in the band name, someone hires the duo for their first gig at a club outside Brussels, and Iris decides to dye her hair dark red and get a shorter cut. Her domineering behaviour becomes obvious where she asserts her authority and insists on cutting Romeo's hair short – a gesture which can overtly symbolise Iris's containment of Romeo's already frail masculinity. Between screams and pointed fingers, she giggles behind Romeo's back, which shows how her angry bouts are not serious, but Romeo's quiet obedience and sincere unawareness of Iris's jokes still invites sympathetic responses towards him and not her. Later Romeo and Iris light several votive candles in a church and his tentative query about whether their partnership can exist outside music remains without clear answers. After a cryptic 'who knows', Iris takes a few candles, showing her irreverence for a place of religious worship and profaning another assumed bastion of Italian culture. On the road to their first gig their car runs dry and, after hitchhiking a lift with a lorry driver, she takes several intense drags off a joint and Romeo's refusal to partake makes Iris gesticulate in disapproval.

At the gig, she sings 'Such a Bad Girl', a piece whose lyrical content bears close consideration. Her words narrate a comprehensive account of Iris and Romeo's story, which, however little one understands, can construct Iris as the 'bad girl', who perhaps has already planned for those lines to come true, or as the knowing woman whose omniscience fuels her character's threatening yet magic charm. A look at the lyrics reveals several key narrative denouements that occur shortly after:

> Didn't you know I was such a bad girl
> Haven't you heard what a big time liar I was
> Didn't they tell you never trust someone like me
> Someone who never sleeps, never smiles, never dreams
> Someone who sits in the dark, swims in the night
> Who likes to dance alone, someone who has no home
> Didn't you see what a weirdo I was
> Couldn't you tell I was nearly a mental case
> Didn't your friend Jack warn you
> To run away from someone like me
> Someone who hates to sleep, doesn't smile, never dreams
> Someone who sings in the dark, swims in the night
> Who loves to dance alone, someone who has no home
> And you know what the funny thing is?
> The very very funny thing is that after all
> I was the one to love you
> The one to love you, don't you forget baby

I was the one to love you
Didn't you know I was such a bad girl
Couldn't you tell I was nearly a mental case
How did you guess you'd have to pick up the pieces
You should have known not to play with broken glass
And tell your best friend Jack please I was such a bad girl, yes
But I was the one to love you
The liar, the dreamer, the sleepless, the dancer

These words would summarise and offer further insight into their story if they appeared at the end. The signs forewarning Romeo about the dangers Iris represents are present throughout the whole film, which justifies her lines 'didn't you know' and 'you should have known'. The whole song reads as a lengthy disclaimer about the various obvious threats she poses to the 'you' being addressed, but the chorus becomes a sincere declaration of love for the one she has abandoned. Again, the words she sings paint the clear picture of a two-faced character, first emphasising and sometimes inflating her difficult characteristics – which Iris never hides – calling herself a liar, a weirdo, a mental case, but later showing how, after all, she had genuine feelings for him. These contrasting aspects the song describes are a key feature of Iris's character and her performance of a song where she confesses and often exaggerates her negative side, I would argue, can attract and repel potential identifications at the same time. Iris's ambiguity is, as the lines above demonstrate, largely constructed through the songs she sings, which, performance after performance, break and rebuild her charm, confusing Romeo and audiences alike.

The other piece, 'Spider's Web', follows a still showing a poster where a new sticker announcing newly added dates appears every few seconds. The lyrical theme, again, seems loosely related to the story of Iris and Romeo in a similar way to 'Such A Bad Girl'. However, while she sings 'I will not fall in your spider's web', putting herself in the position of the prey, the lyrical content describes Romeo's future situation, not Iris's. The way their performance is represented in the bright background, while the two music businessmen trade cards in the dim foreground, shows changes happening which later place Romeo in the position of the prey and Iris in that of the predator, turning the song into another premonition of things to come. While she sings about a story whose protagonist later becomes Romeo – and not her – Romeo plays the keyboards and a small electric guitar whose sound

remains low in the mix through the performance. The synchronisation between their singing and playing, on the one hand, and the sound track, on the other, lacks credibility, but Romeo's parts are not aurally prominent, whereas her singing about his destiny remains clearly heard through the whole piece, which indicates her overall narrative control. As the title could infer, her words weave a narrative web into which Romeo later falls – something the clairvoyant herself did earlier via her prediction.

As in the film's publicity poster, Iris is consistently shown above or in front of Romeo in the visuals, while aurally she often takes control in the interaction between the two of them and foretells their story through her songs. Romeo remains stuck in the background while Iris tells their story, leaving him virtually without a narrative voice, as earlier implied by his recurring inability to light up without someone lending him their cigarette lighter – a shorthand for narrative power. While Romeo plays instruments and employs recording equipment, his overall input remains represented as secondary, leaving the limelight for Iris. After their umpteenth gig at the club where their debut takes place, Iris gleefully announces a quite influential music businessman has asked her for a private meeting, but Romeo's exclusion already shows the prophetic meaning the words she was singing earlier carried. Romeo becomes jealous after she reveals their meeting place is a hotel, but Iris reminds Romeo that they are not husband and wife, confronting his overtly patriarchal pretensions to contain her. However, she quickly ruins her credibility by affirming she would sacrifice her integrity for him, too. Finally, the meeting takes place and Iris finds out about the businessman's homosexuality, which defuses all the threats Romeo had envisaged, but the outcome means their musical partnership is over, as the man makes Iris the perfect offer and she finally accepts. Their partnership, however, turns complicated before coming to a difficult end. The dream Romeo had thought about for weeks becomes a reality when, after the meeting, Iris finds him and initiates their first and last sexual encounter.

The scene where Iris and Romeo make love is one of two scenes featuring a recording of one of their songs. Earlier, right after recording 'Like Angels Do' in the first rehearsal, the piece is playing as Romeo watches Iris sleep while still sitting on the sofa. The scene leading up to this shows Romeo still working on the recording, which implies that he was the one who put the song on. And yet, despite Romeo

being the character responsible for the source music in the scene, the use of a piece where she shows her vocal qualities, singing about longing for a loved one, ensures that Iris will pervade the scene, even if she remains asleep until the end. Like 'Spider's Web', this song seems to be about Romeo despite being written and sung by Iris – another example where Iris becomes the voice telling her and his stories, keeping him quiet. Another interesting element is Romeo's undecided behaviour in the scene described above. He lies Iris down, involuntarily revealing the underwear under her baggy sweater, and pulls the sweater down and up to cover and uncover her a few times – a gesture that shows his inability to do what he wants and let himself go, perhaps intimidated by Iris's voice pervading the place despite her being asleep.

Towards the end, after Iris has met the label representatives, she comes home to find Romeo waiting for her, still sitting on the sofa, surrendered to sleep. She plays a cassette featuring one of their songs, 'Black Hole', where she sings about being abandoned. These songs are a means for the amplification of Iris's character, which first happens unintentionally after Romeo finds himself staring at her while hearing her voice, and later intensifies her presence while she seduces Romeo. Its lyrical content gives yet another premonition of future events in the life of Romeo who, the morning after, becomes the narrating 'I' who waits for the one who abandoned him in the song Iris wrote and performed. Right after she presses 'play' the music wakes him, they finally make love accompanied by Iris's recorded voice, but her overturning of the sex ban set earlier hides secrets about the outcome of Iris's meeting, which she finally reveals the morning after. She was offered a contract, but not Romeo. His anger and frustration as a consequence of her selfish behaviour and awkward responses portray Romeo as morally right while Iris is clearly wrong, hence she seems unusually ashamed and quiet despite her otherwise ebullient personality. Romeo tells her she knows nothing about music without him, calls her a 'stratospheric bitch', and tells her she did nothing but pretend she was feeling something for him all night, but her reactions are limited to apologies and the odd attempt to justify her choices. The one offensive thing she can say regards Romeo who, in the words of the music label representatives she met, looks *démodé*, but otherwise she remains rather quiet given her trademark hot temperament.

After their breakup, she never sings again in the film's real world and her departure seals her character as the 'bad' one between the two. She moves out and later Romeo is shown sitting alone in the square outside the cathedral where she had her choir rehearsal on the first day they spent together, fantasising about killing Iris by gunfire as she sings 'Blonder By The Second', wearing a white taffeta dress and dancing provocatively. Interestingly, Romeo remembers her singing her least serious piece, while the one she chooses for their encounter is among her brightest efforts. He recalls Iris's weakest performance, while she plays her best song, which, I would argue, shows how important music becomes in the conscious manufacturing of Iris's image by herself, first, and later by Romeo as he deals with her departure through his violent fantasies.

Her imaginary killing – reminiscent of the final sacrifice troublesome females are often subjected to in film noir – can represent the one way his inoffensive character knows to exact revenge on Iris. In *The Women Who Knew Too Much*, Tania Modleski (1988) extensively discusses how women are effectively destroyed and yet never totally destroyed (p.112) in seven Alfred Hitchcock films, and addresses different instances where a man finally murders the heroine, restoring the patriarchal order. She describes the way Alicia (Ingrid Bergman), the promiscuous, troublesome woman in *Notorious* (1946), undergoes a 'purification largely through visual means' prior to death. There are interesting parallels between how Alicia and Iris are represented:

> In the party sequence, Alicia, photographed in a long shot and standing in a bright, harsh light, is wearing a bold striped blouse with a bared midriff (which, in a highly symbolic and repressive gesture, [her lover] Devlin will cover when they go out to the car), and she exudes a kind of animal sexuality that is in keeping with her attire […] By the end of the film, however, when Alicia is on the verge of dying, she is etherealized and spiritualized until she becomes practically bodyless.
>
> (Modleski 1988, p. 61)

Devlin's gesture resembles Romeo's gesture when Iris takes off her sweater after the choir rehearsal scene. While her clothes are generally not too revealing, her sinuous stage moves and her overt promiscuity sexualise her character, until the fantasy killing scene, where she sings her worst piece and wears a white dress, and the bullets reach her chest in the middle of a strange audiovisual performance of bridal

innocence. Prior to killing Iris in the fantasy scene, Romeo creates a brief imaginary audiovisual portrayal where she undergoes purification through visual and aural means. Despite his being nothing but a fantasy, he tries to destroy Iris after producing a purified, ethereal – and yet still vaguely desirable – image and evoking her singing a silly ditty about missing her man. Romeo wants revenge because she resists those patriarchal norms whereby he hoped he would control her despite her defiant stand vis-à-vis these customs. The patriarchal norms Romeo assumes and the ill manners for which she reprimanded him earlier are still quite universal in the Italy she had abandoned years earlier, which positions Romeo as the stereotypical average Italian man who follows the model the dominant culture shows him.

These final reflections allow me to elaborate a broader point about Iris's complex character and about how different identifications can proliferate through her character. On the surface, Iris could be dismissed as nothing but a voluble jaded young woman who has a difficult temperament and finally hurts someone, revealing herself as the bad one. And yet, however problematic, her behaviour infringes on a few rules about the narrative paths women are and are not allowed to tread in films. In *Alice Doesn't* (1984), Teresa de Lauretis carefully describes how narrative perpetuates the roles of active male hero (subject) who moves the narrative, on the one hand, and passive female boundary, obstacle, riddle (object), who makes his journey treacherous, on the other, channelling the woman spectator towards identifications that are split between subject and object, hence never total (for a comprehensive examination of these ideas refer to de Lauretis 1984, pp. 103-157). Quoting Mulvey's seminal 1975 essay 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', de Lauretis observes that:

> If the female position in narrative is fixed by the mythical mechanism in a certain portion of the plot-space, which the hero crosses or crosses to, a quite similar effect is produced in narrative cinema by the apparatus of looks converging on the female figure. The woman is framed by the look of the camera as icon, or object of the gaze: an image made to be looked at by the spectator, whose look is relayed by the look of the male character(s). The latter not only controls the events and narrative action but is "the bearer" of the look of the spectator. The male protagonist is thus "a figure in a landscape," she adds, "free to command the stage … of spatial illusion in which he articulates the look and creates the action" (p. 13). The metaphors could not be more appropriate.

> In that landscape, stage, or portion of plot-space, the female character may be all along, throughout the film, representing and literally marking out the place (to) which the hero will cross. There she simply awaits his return like Darling Clementine; […] Or she may resist confinement in that symbolic space by disturbing it, perverting it, making trouble, seeking to exceed the boundary—visually as well as narratively—as in film noir.
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> (de Lauretis 1984, p. 139)

While Iris's framing corresponds to de Lauretis's description and Romeo bears the gaze, controlling the events and narrative action was obviously surrendered to women. *He* gives up control, so perhaps those women still represent obstacles instead of gaining narrative control. However, Iris does control the narrative for a few ephemeral moments. She resists confinement, visually and narratively, but her narrative trouble comes through her songs – a recurrent element that McLean (1993) discusses extensively.

But de Lauretis never considers music and sound among the potential means for a temporary offer for identifications above the visuals. On the contrary, she notes how: 'Cinematic identification, in particular, is inscribed across the two registers articulated by the system of the look, the narrative and the visual (sound becoming a necessary third register in those films which intentionally use sound as an anti-narrative or de-narrativizing element).' (1984, p. 141). Therefore music never becomes a significant element in de Lauretis's account – which, it is worth remembering, was published at least five years earlier than most film music studies texts. McLean discusses the way other feminist theorists had not accounted for music's power in their writing about the films she studies, but she cites Mulvey's words where she talks about musical numbers pushing the narrative towards a 'no-man's-land' and applies Rick Altman's (1989) consideration about the reversal of the image-sound hierarchy found in the film musical to the song-and-dance numbers in *Gilda* and *Affair in Trinidad*:

> The importance of the reversal of the image-sound hierarchy is more than formal; for once it occurs, music does not merely drive our relation to the image, it drives the image itself, and even cuts correspond to musical phrasing. The musical number is in this sense Mulvey's "no-man's-land," a regime different both from narrative and from pure spectacle.
>
> (Altman quoted in McLean 1993, pp. 5-6)

Despite her musical slips where she sings ‘Black Hole’ and ‘Spider’s Web’, Iris effectively tells the story through their lyrical content, placing herself somewhere between narrative and spectacle where she can temporarily inhabit a space traditionally unavailable for cinematic women. While her temporary incursion towards the narrative space where ‘action’ happens might occur because Romeo fills his narrative boots quite badly, she nonetheless takes control using the songs she sings, which, I would argue, becomes enabled through the image-sound hierarchy inversion Altman describes in the passage McLean quotes. Since her songs narrate Romeo’s destiny Iris is constructed as the teller, which counterbalances the character and *mise-en-scène* flaws that undermine her narrative power. For Italian audiences, however, her narration debatably remains at the mercy of individuals’ understanding of English, since there are not subtitles for the words Iris sings.

Finally, Romeo never crosses (to) Iris, but instead she removes herself, leaving him alone. She takes a train to Paris, following her career prospects – another element that seemingly infringes on the stillness through which women are defined in the narrative model de Lauretis describes. Whichever destiny one may foresee for Iris after the end credits start rolling, the choices she makes are still largely unavailable to women in the films made in Italy (and other countries) in the 1990s and 2000s. Her choices are not counterbalanced through extreme sacrifice nor does she earn redemption through obeying patriarchy and the paths set for women under its norms. If we think about Iris’s trajectory using the roles Molly Haskell discusses in *From Reverence to Rape* (1974), the one sacrifice Iris, who belongs among those that Haskell terms ‘extraordinary women’, makes is love for career. However, how she feels about Romeo remains an obscure theme in the film, perhaps because her ambiguity overshadows her emotional world, and her musical career is a question mark, since the film ends showing Romeo still playing and singing their songs, but leaving her destiny unrepresented. While one may infer her musical failure since Romeo was the one responsible for writing the music, the one thing Iris loses for her ‘bad’ behaviour seems to be the credibility that this extraordinary woman could have had if she had not wronged Romeo nor performed her songs badly and, above all, had not compromised her narrative power.

As illustrated above, the songs she sings construct a contradictory character, often confusing, which can produce disruptions in audience identifications with her – leaving the perceiver negotiating those split identifications that de Lauretis talks about in the chapter quoted above. At the same time, the way her character chooses English as the only language for her songs can potentially 'lower' her narrative voice and construct her power and assertiveness as foreign to Italian culture, just as those English-language songs by Spanish bands construct heteronormative masculinity's Other as foreign to Spanish culture in *Historias del Kronen*. If a strong female singing non-Italian songs discourages identifications where 'Italian' and 'troublesome woman' can happily coexist, the way Iris finally renounces the narrative power she had, however temporarily, when she tells Romeo that she will let the music label provide the songs, represents her finally relinquishing any narrative power – a necessary sacrifice for the swift restoration of the narrative order she had upset. But, again, what about Romeo?

At the end, Iris's father reveals Romeo's embarrassing concealed musical past as a fictional *Cantagiro*[49] participant in the early-1970s whose hit 'Bella Senza Trucco' (beautiful without make-up) briefly enjoyed chart success in the years following the contest. After begging him for his autograph on the vinyl copy he treasures, Iris's father convinces Romeo to perform as the guest star at the Santa Barbara celebration alongside real singer – and *Cantagiro* participant – Mino Reitano, a well known Italian 'nazionalpopolare'[50] singer famous for his songs about

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[49] *Il Cantagiro* (literally 'sing-tour') was a popular touring song festival in which a caravan of singers travelled the width and breadth of Italy in the summer and 'people's juries' in the various cities voted for their songs. The event was popular in the 1960s and was revived, without significant success, in the 1990s <http://www.storiaradiotv.it/CANTAGIRO.htm> [Accessed 27 September 2010].

[50] In the online edition of *Grande Dizionario Italiano Hoepli*, the adjective 'nazionalpopolare' (literally 'national-popular') is defined as follows: 'Nella riflessione critica di A. Gramsci, di fenomeni culturali che, esprimendo valori profondamente radicati nella tradizione di un intero popolo, riescono a interpretare le aspirazioni e la specificità della civiltà di una nazione' (In the critical reflections of Antonio Gramsci, of cultural phenomena which, by expressing values that are deeply rooted in the tradition of a whole population, can interpret the aspirations and the specificity of a nation) <http://dizionari.hoepli.it/Dizionario_Italiano/parola/nazionalpopolare.aspx?idD=1&Query=nazionalpopolare&lettera=N> [Accessed 27 September 2010]. However, since the 1980s, its perceived meaning changes after the president of RAI (Italy's state TV) Enrico Manca calls a variety show conducted by famous TV personality Pippo Baudo 'nazional-popolare, e non nel senso gramsciano del termine, ma in senso negativo' (nazional-popolare, and not in the Gramscian sense of the term, but rather in a negative sense) (Manca quoted in Choukhadarian 2010), causing sarcastic responses and a semantic hijacking whereby the adjective has since taken a different connotation and now predominantly means 'popular' in the negative sense, and sometimes 'trashy'

the feeling of dislocation he experienced as a young immigrant. These final revelations uncover Romeo's musical origins, which are largely Italian and a far cry from those electronic tunes he plays as The Freezer. His musical guilty secret invalidates his own credibility as the character who was pushing Marguerite towards a fresher repertoire and telling Iris off for her tackiness in the first recording session. After being subjected first to 'Bella Senza Trucco', which Iris's father plays on the home stereo, and later to playing keyboards alongside a screaming Mino Reitano singing his classic 'L'Uomo Con La Valigia' (the man with the suitcase) accompanied by a few vintage-looking compatriots playing various instruments at the local Italian dancehall-taverna-restaurant, he escapes their company, returns to Brussels and finds a message on the answer machine in which Iris announces her departure for Paris the following morning. The day after, as the train prepares to leave, 'Black Hole' fades in as a dramatic song while Iris, suitcases already on the train, keeps begging Romeo to go along while Romeo keeps begging Iris to stay. Finally Iris decides to leave, Romeo remains there alone, and the musical piece, now featuring him singing, turns to source song as the scene changes to Romeo playing and singing 'Black Hole' live – a musical lucky escape whereby Romeo finally gains authorial ownership for their songs, restore the narrative order through singing words about his current situation, and redeems himself for those uncomfortable moments in the brief visit to Charleroi's Italian community.

Overall, the soundtrack plays a paramount role in the making and breaking of every main character who has something to do with music. Romeo's dissatisfaction about the musical repertoire allowed on the cruise ship becomes shorthand for his general existential dissatisfaction. His piano version of Stevie Wonder's 'I Just Called To Say I Love You' perhaps reveals the impossibility of a musical union between him and Marguerite, whose Jacques Brel obsession becomes suffocating for Romeo's aspirations. Marguerite's major *faux pas* is a venture towards the pop repertoire Romeo likes, but where her misplaced vocal talents cause her character's demise. Finally, the songs she sings alternatively construct Iris as a fascinating but calculating young woman, a silly 'airhead', a knowing and enigmatic 'teller', and a

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<http://www.ffwebmagazine.it/ffw/page.asp?VisImg=S&Art=3823&Cat=1&I=immagini/PERSONAGGI/gramsci3_int.jpg&IdTipo=0&TitoloBlocco=L%E2%80%99analisi&Tipo=&Tag=>
[Accessed 27 September 2010].

lovable scoundrel, and produce a 'schizophrenic' character whose credibility as the potential extraordinary woman is stained by inconsistency, musical and otherwise.

If those textual factors undermining her performance where she tells the story through her songs and the recurring fetishisation of Iris's body disavow anxiety about the threats she poses for Romeo's frail masculinity, the process whereby her voice quickly becomes established as the site where her character's narrative power and devaluation alternate needs a few further closing remarks. Iris's role as lyricist as well as singer places her character somewhere between the stereotypically objectified singing-and-dancing woman and a woman who can, however temporarily, achieve narrative control. While she invites the male gaze through her dancing and singing – all actions that involve using the body – she, at the same time, resists being watched and objectified. Her unusually active role in the music-making process and the narrative power she shows can deter a total fetishisation, but her musical slips can undermine her otherwise seductive image, which alternatively counteracts the dangerous charm she has where she gives a solid vocal performance of introspective songs and positions her temporarily above the level where those gazes can objectify her. In other words, her writing and singing her own songs propels her above the average cinematic singing woman and a few minutes later drops her far below the average femme fatale, which defuses the potential she shows earlier, which gradually defuses her narrative power, mistake after mistake. At the train station Romeo's petty inquiry about whether she will still write her own songs for the new act exposes her final surrender, clearly hinting at the demise of Iris and her temporary narrative control. Through relinquishing all control on the writing process and her image, as the new shorter, boyish 'porcupine' hairstyle shows, Iris abandons those audiovisual markers that had constructed her as the assertive woman who earlier manipulates Romeo – and the narrative – and now becomes manipulated herself.

Again, below the surface where gender dominates these identifications one can see how the association between threatening females and non-Italian popular music, on the one hand, and frail masculinities and a certain variety of 1970s Italian 'nazionalpopolare' songs, on the other, emerges, providing different musical materials to build every musically defined character, alternating an element of strong female to an element of villain, but again and again using foreign songs for a woman who dares to defy the still limited cinematic roles she can claim. Perhaps Romeo's

final reappropriation of their piece 'Black Hole' can symbolise a reclamation of a masculinity outside the stereotypical frail Italian males, vexed and often wounded by females, which his character's behaviour invokes until the end. The way Romeo finally asserts his right to keep and perform a piece she wrote for their act can support his earlier claim that Iris knows nothing about music without him, which implies his merit for their success. Furthermore, Romeo playing and singing 'Black Hole' can suggest his reclamation of a narrative voice Iris was using eralier, but which Romeo finally regains control of. The invisible but audible dubbing I discuss earlier, however, can destabilise his reappropriation. Danielle Hipkins poses questions about the necessity for a reconsideration of Italy's cinematic history through an Italian feminist viewpoint and interestingly notes how, among other aspects, 'we need […] to consider the representation of both men and women in the light of a rich body of theory' (2008, p. 234). Verdone's Romeo calls for further attention, which unfortunately I could not offer him in the context of this chapter since the songs centred on the female protagonists. His character and other similar cinematic males undoubtedly require further study if we want to respond to Hipkins' challenge and promote a comprehensive understanding of Italian film where not only do we attempt a second take on gender, but also a first take on music and sound, which, as I hope to have demonstrated, can intersect and offer a new interesting perspective on the identities growing under the surface where nations are defined.

Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo
Stati di Agitazione

The feature film based on the eponymous debut novel by Enrico Brizzi (1994) was largely forgotten both by critics and academics, and all writing about the story of Alex and Aidi remains centred on their paper incarnation, leaving nothing but the odd mention for their celluloid version. Perhaps the movie's perceived inferiority takes shape in the shadow of a book whose massive success meant its cinematic transposition was bound to fail any comparisons. But the story retains the urgency

the novel expressed about the emotional place the protagonist and his friends negotiate, a condition the music articulates in a rather interesting way.

One day Alex (Stefano Accorsi), the young protagonist whose friends narrate the story through a voiceover, receives a phone call from Aidi (Violante Placido). They meet up, talk, become closer and closer, but there are obstacles. Aidi is going to study in the USA for a whole year at the beginning of the summer and, after Alex talks about being together, she tells him there are problems and decides she wants to be alone for a while. Heartbroken and forlorn, Alex befriends Martino (Alessandro Zamattio), a charismatic yet inscrutable character. The two share a night out and compare their similar views about a world where belonging to 'the group' and obeying all the rules mainstream society imposes seems unrewarding and pointless, but after a rough patch Martino kills himself, leaving 'the group', and leaving Alex suffering alone in the difficult weeks preceding Aidi's departure. Alex struggles but finds a balance and, however painfully, on the night before Aidi flies to America the two promise one another their special tie will not end there.

Despite the apathetic press responses the film received and the overt disillusionment of a few readers of Brizzi's novel, the songs surrounding its protagonist produce several interesting musical definitions of a character whose feelings of estrangement and alienation emerge effectively through the music. The soundtrack shows a careful balance between non-Italian and Italian music and between older and newer bands. In the following pages I will explore how these musical choices construct Alex and Aidi, and how songs can produce scenarios where the outsiders are not exclusively defined through non-Italian popular music – and therefore are not constructed as a totally alien, 'unwelcome' concept the way Iris was in *Sono pazzo di Iris Blond*. I will argue that the combination of a character challenging the roles available as a growing 'late-adolescent' in the 1990s and a musical selection including old and new Italian and Anglo-American popular music can offer identifications whereby old and new Italian popular music express Alex's condition, which therefore becomes 'played' in the Italian cinematic landscape as a not-necessarily-alien concept for audiences outside Alex's age bracket. Despite resisting the adult world's rules, Alex remains outside the known cinematic stereotypes about youth rebellion and finds a balance whereby Italian rock music and

several Anglo-American rock songs construct him as a complex character through whom different audiences can see but also hear their culture.

The present chapter will not compare the movie and the novel nor reference the way music appears in the novel as opposed to its cinematic transposition, but the way music remains a fundamental element in the novel calls for a few quick remarks about its use. The subheading on the cover of the first edition reads 'Una maestosa storia d'amore e di "rock parrocchiale"' ('a majestic story of love and "parochial rock"'), which hints at the paramount role rock music plays already in the novel and how all the songs mentioned in the story acquire a close, quasi-local meaning for its protagonist. The narrating 'I' never namedrops bands and songs without integrating their meaning for him and his friends, which makes Brizzi's novel a fertile terrain for a film where music, already written in the story, would perform interesting functions.

However, there are necessary differences between the songs surrounding the character of Alex in the novel and his celluloid self, which are, quite predictably, budget-driven. Enza Negroni, the young film director who was given the difficult job of transposing Brizzi's alter ego to the silver screen, notes how 'Nella colonna sonora compaiono parecchi gruppi emiliani ed anche i musicisti menzionati nel romanzo, tranne alcuni come Clash e Sex Pistols per difficoltà con i diritti d'autore.' (The soundtrack features several bands from Emilia and the musicians mentioned in the novel, except some, like the Clash and the Sex Pistols, for copyright difficulties)[51] (Negroni quoted in Falcinella 1996) Whether the copyright difficulties she talks about are financial remains unclear, but given other directors' admissions about the excessive costs certain big names on the soundtracks can involve (see, for example, Ligabue's interview in the following section), and the bands mentioned in the interview, one can infer the reasons for their exclusion would have been chiefly budgetary. Furthermore, there are several other big names whose glaring aural absence in the film would have similar grounds, the obvious one being the Red Hot Chili Peppers, whose guitarist, John Frusciante, gives the novel its title.[52] Negroni

[51] <http://www.landscape.it/viceversa/film/intervistaenzanegroni.htm> [Accessed 26 July 2010].

[52] As the title hints at, guitarist John Frusciante ('Jack' in the title for copyright-related reasons) had left the band, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, in the early 1990s at the peak of their success, an event clearly echoed in the novel by Alex's being outside the group, his friend Martino killing himself, and Aidi finally leaving for the USA. The English translation reads *Jack Frusciante Has Left the Band: A Love Story – With Rock 'n' Roll* (1997), hence loses the Italian title's twofold meaning – in Italian 'gruppo' means 'band' in the musical sense and 'group' in the sense implied in expressions such as 'being outside the group'.

makes another interesting comment in the interview about the way girls feature in the novel. When Nicola Falcinella asks about whether Negroni had trouble directing the actors, she elaborately answers 'No, a parte con le ragazze, perché, anche se mi dispiace, nel libro di Brizzi sono viste sotto una cattiva luce' (No, apart from with the girls, because, although I regret that, in Brizzi's book they are seen in a bad light) (Negroni quoted in Falcinella 1996). In the following pages I am going to focus on the several songs through which the boys are articulated and the few songs to which the few girls in the film are related – following a common distribution pattern of songs between males and females that has a few obvious and yet interesting gender implications.

Aidi, the girl Alex loves, never listens to music in the film world and where she tells Alex which music she likes, his scorn after finding out she listens to Simon and Garfunkel makes him utter a patronising 'forse è il caso che ti faccia un paio di cassette' (perhaps I should make you a couple of tapes). While initially she seems cross after Alex expresses his educational intents, Aidi never defends the music she likes nor tells Alex off for his pretentiousness. Towards the end, her blank stare after Alex's friends ask her for a CBGB memento shows her utter lack of interest in the punk rock bands the boys worship, placing Alex and his friends in one cultural dimension and Aidi and the other girls in another. The females who feature in *Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo* are never chiefly defined through music, and Aidi's 'musical education' never takes place, as the CBGB episode shows. Music remains chiefly a boys' pastime, which, given Negroni's vague and yet clear remarks about the way girls are represented, shows how the story perpetuates the old audiovisual stereotypes whereby girls and music remains a problematic combination and those who are seen in a bad light are often seen to a 'bad' soundtrack, too.[53] (In the case of Aidi, Simon and Garfunkel count as 'bad' insofar as Alex mocks Aidi for telling him she likes their music.)

Later, Bjork's 'Big Time Sensuality' is heard in the club where Alex kisses another girl the night after Aidi tells him she needs a break. The one non-Italian female artist on the soundtrack appears where another girl threatens the tie between Alex and Aidi – a scene which, however short, could represent another example

[53] For a comprehensive study about the complex cinematic representations of girls through music, see McNelis (2010).

where a one-off ‘different’ piece accompanies a female causing narrative disturbance. While there are several non-Italian songs, Bjork is the sole non-Italian female artist in the soundtrack. All the other songs accompany the boys and, despite a few songs being about girls and occurring where Alex and Aidi are hanging out, these are never presented as the girls’ songs. While music effectively belongs to boys, there are a few interesting instances where the songs featuring on the dramatic soundtrack are outside the genre professed by Alex and friends in the first few sequences, which, I will argue, can offer wider identifications for audiences outside the ‘punk rock rude boys’ like Alex.

The match between the first few songs in the initial sequences and Alex’s declaration about his musical taste after Aidi tells him she likes Simon and Garfunkel establishes a solid tie between Alex’s musical taste and the music surrounding him, which makes songs a preferred means for character delineation. ‘È Aria’, by music supervisor Umberto Palazzo and his act Santo Niente, accompanies the opening sequence, which shows Alex darting through central Bologna on a bicycle at night and the intro for Marlene Kuntz’s ‘Canzone Di Domani’ is heard as a dramatic song on another bicycle journey a few shots later. A Johnny Rotten poster dominates Alex’s bedroom, and the Violent Femmes’s ‘Gone Daddy Gone’ is heard as Alex rides his bicycle towards his first date with Aidi, where he reveals he likes punk, new wave, and other ‘80s stuff. Among his favourite bands Alex names The Smiths, The Cure, The Sex Pistols, The Clash, The Damned, and Red Hot Chili Peppers. While mid-1990s Italian alternative rockers Il Santo Niente vaguely fit the description, Johnny Rotten was The Sex Pistols’s controversial singer and the Violent Femmes are a US alternative punk rock trio who started putting records out in the 1980s. Furthermore, ‘Gone Daddy Gone’ is about a beautiful young girl and the chorus repeats the words ‘love is gone’ several times, which makes the piece a quite ominous musical starter for the story of Alex and Aidi given how her final departure for the USA hangs over their heads like a grey cloud throughout the whole film. Despite a few otherwise cheerful musical qualities (a bouncy xylophone and upbeat rhythm), a descending melodic scale keeps returning on the verse again and again, and creates a tension, which perhaps increases through the lyrical content and through Gordon Gano’s insidious vocal performance. Later, Alex and his band, Balotta Cocogena, are shown in the rehearsal room playing a punk song in Italian

about being high, with Alex on bass guitar. Up to that point, all the music surrounding Alex matches his professed musical taste. However, the other piece occurring where Alex is going to Aidi's house differs quite a lot.

Pulp's 'Miss Shapes', a classic Britpop track, accompanies Alex's bicycle journey up the hills towards Aidi and, besides lyrically introducing ideas about being different, its use calls for further attention. Pulp are outside the broad genre Alex indicates earlier and outside Aidi's limited genre interests, but their music can provide a new dimension halfway between the two personalities and perhaps add further depth to Alex's stereotypically masculine rock taste and Aidi's stereotypically feminine disinterest in rock music, opening further positions for different identifications. 'Miss Shapes' and 'Bar Italia', heard later while Alex and Aidi are shown hanging out in the central streets of Bologna as the closeness between the two grows, are the opening and closing tracks of Pulp's acclaimed 1995 album *Different Class*, one among Britpop's milestone works, extremely popular in the UK and Italy alike. Interestingly, the first piece marks the beginning and the last song marks the end of the idyllic phase between Alex and Aidi. After 'Bar Italia' fades out, the two start talking about their relationship, which leads to Aidi's painful decision to stop seeing Alex for a while. Between the two Pulp songs, another anomalous track appears playing quietly in the background while Alex and his parents discuss the importance of using condoms.

'Canto Nel Vuoto', a sinuous trip hop piece by Üstmamò, is a significant track. While Üstmamò's independent credentials are quite solid, front-woman Mara Redeghieri's voice is quite unexpected, since Üstmamò are the only Italian act featuring female vocals on the whole soundtrack. The piece is playing on Alex's bedroom stereo next door as the three awkwardly discuss contraception, which means it is never heard clearly until Alex exits the sitting room, but her voice emerges clearly for a few seconds. These three songs diversify the genre range the protagonist describes as the music he likes, which, I would argue, can encourage wider identifications outside the 'angry young rocker' roles that Alex and his friends embrace.

After a temporary breakup between Alex and Aidi, another Üstmamò piece is heard playing at the slumber party where Aidi reads aloud about tao and zen, and her girlfriends oscillate between empathy and boredom. 'Amore/Cuore' again remains in

the background since the girls' words aurally prevail, but Redeghieri's distinctive voice is discernible. While the two Üstmamò songs are never prominent in the sound track, their placement can, however obscurely, unite Alex and Aidi through the album where 'Canto Nel Vuoto' and 'Amore/Cuore' feature, *Üst* (1996). But besides linking Alex and Aidi, the Üstmamò songs place a woman's voice singing in Italian in the film – a quite exceptional event given the general absence of songs performed by eminent Italian women singers not only in *Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo*, but also in other 1990s Italian films. Given Alex's musical taste and the coincidence between the sitar opening of 'Amore/Cuore' and the eastern reading materials Aidi chooses for her slumber party, one can imagine *she* listens to Üstmamò and not Alex. However, the music playing in her bedroom is a one-off and unconfirmed musical description for a character who can never fully claim her own music elsewhere in the film. There are three girls in the bedroom and Aidi never talks about the music playing while she reads and generally never talks about music again after Alex questions her about her musical taste earlier. While accepting 'Amore/Cuore' as Aidi's song is clearly problematic, the short excerpt faintly heard among their words, her aurally unmatched declaration about Simon and Garfunkel, and a few sequences where she sings a song about Yogi Bear for Alex, are the few musical articulations for a character who lacks sparkle – perhaps precisely because there are not any songs that open windows on the inner world of Aidi as much as on that of Alex. A few minutes after the opening sequence, one already feels close to Alex, perhaps partially because the narrators are his friends, but the music surrounding him, I would argue, opens his character and makes his inner world available, leaving Aidi's character vague and unknown until the end.

Later, there are other songs whose wider and diverse genre range can allow different audiences to feel close to Alex's and his friends' inner world, where youth rebellion seems the tip of a narrative iceberg full of anxieties about their adult lives ahead. As the cover blurb on the inside of the front cover of *Jack Frusciante*'s US edition aptly describes him, 'Alex D. is on the verge of just about everything and consumed by a restless, unanswered longing that rebels against jumping through the hoops of school. Staring down the tunnel to a mundane adulthood, he is appalled by the banality and the overwhelming predictability of it all: teachers, parents, and above all his classmates—the seething masses of dutiful zombies and sistren [*sic*] of

the Evervirgin Sorority' (1997, inside of the front cover). On the surface level, his late-adolescent anxieties are presented as the prerogative of the young protagonist and his friends in the novel and in the film. However, the film soundtrack makes those anxieties close and perceptible for wider audiences, bridges the age gap and perhaps, partially, the gender gap between a late adolescent and whoever can still see the reasons for his desperate agitation.

Kassabian notes how *Dirty Dancing* 'uses a combination of period songs, contemporary popular songs, and classical Hollywood techniques to score a film set in 1963. The reason for this choice seems clear enough: *Dirty Dancing* is a teen film, pitched to a teen audience to whom the music of the early 1960s would not necessarily speak.' (2001, p. 77). *Jack Frusciante*'s soundtrack uses a similar combination of period songs and vintage popular songs to open its doors to wider audiences. If, as Kassabian puts it, '*Dirty Dancing* uses today's music in a yesterday-set film to connect today's youth with yesterday's youth' (p. 77), *Jack Frusciante* uses yesterday's music in a today-set film to connect yesterday's youth with today's youth.

Among the songs I discuss above, 'Gone Daddy Gone' first appears on the Violent Femmes' eponymous 1982 debut album. About halfway through the film, on the day after the temporary breakup between Aidi and Alex, his morning bicycle commute is accompanied by a dramatic song entitled 'Intimisto' by CSI (Consorzio Suonatori Indipendenti), the 1990s incarnation of historic punk rock band CCCP Fedeli alla Linea, who started recording music between Berlin and Reggio Emilia in the early 1980s (Testani 2006, pp. 96-9). Among the bands whose music could not feature for budgetary reasons, a few are shown through posters (Johnny Rotten) and other unusual means. In the school toilets scene where he first talks to Martino, who later becomes his closest companion, Alex is writing 'Clash City Rockers' on the toilet lid and later Alex and his band mates enumerate every Clash album, title and year of release, on a night out. These moments emphasise their affiliation to earlier bands, getting the point through even to audiences who may not recognise the bands and songs Alex often names. Later, other CSI songs feature. 'A Tratti' accompanies the scene where Alex tries to intervene in a fight between Martino and a few other young men in a penny arcade, 'La Lune Du Prajou' appears as dramatic song when the two enter Martino's bedroom after a night out and returns when Martino's

monologue about being outside the group follows his account of the night a policeman arrests him for drugs possession. After Martino kills himself, CSI's 'Stati Di Agitazione' accompanies the surreal scene – clearly in Alex's imagination – in which Martino is riding a bicycle and Alex keeps running desperately after him, but finally trips and falls. Later, Alex is shown writing parts of a lyric by Diaframma, a significant Italian new wave band from the 1980s, on Martino's grave. 'Colpisci il passato al cuore / Le delusioni di sempre' ('Hit the past in the heart / The disappointments of all times') are the opening lines in the final section of 'Libra', a piece on Diaframma's 1986 album *3 Volte Lacrime*, but Alex changes 'illusioni' (illusions) to 'delusioni' (disappointments), voicing his anguish for Martino's death. Finally, CSI's 'Intimisto' returns where Alex cries while pedalling through the hills at dawn after leaving Aidi's house one last time.

Among the other Italian bands featuring on the soundtrack, there are several bands whose members are still without the prominent place in the history of Italian rock that CCCP members who founded CSI and Diaframma can boast. However, all the younger Italian bands and these earlier bands are somehow related, either because the older bands' music was a major influence or because their members played a part in helping the younger bands' first steps. Marlene Kuntz, CSI, Üstmamò, Umberto Palazzo e il Santo Niente, and Disciplinatha are all 1990s Italian bands who gravitate around Consorzio Produttori Indipendenti, the label CCCP and CSI members Giovanni Lindo Ferretti, Gianni Maroccolo, and Massimo Zamboni founded in the mid-1990s (Pasini in Testani 2006, p. 16, and Testani 2006, p. 97). The connections between the old and new Italian bands whose songs feature on the soundtrack fortify paths for identifications whereby two different generations are drawn towards Alex's anxieties precisely through the musical lineage the old and new bands' songs evoke. The non-Italian bands heard and named are similarly divided between two generations, but without any obvious connections between their members. The Violent Femmes, The Jam, and all the bands Alex talks about started their recording careers between the late 1970s and early 1980s and reached international success in those years, while Pulp, Tricky, Bjork, Faith No More, and Funki Porcini all enjoyed wider success through the 1990s and their songs featuring in the film were released in the mid-1990s.

Furthermore, there are not one-way musical definitions for any given character, because the songs surrounding Alex, Martino, and Aidi are old and new, performed by Italian and non-Italian bands. The variety their songs represent and the absence of a clear association between a character, narrative event, and place, on the one hand, and a given act, track, and genre on the other, seems to produce a wider narrative field in which identifications outside the preconception whereby *Jack Frusciante* is a story about young men for young men are a possibility. Yes, there are few songs outside the male rock canon surrounding the protagonist and his friends, but their songs reflect the way their rebellion strays beyond the stereotypical representations whereby the cinematic young rebel becomes a one-dimensional character who aimlessly opposes the establishment without a defined cause beneath his deeds. Despite the 'punk-new wave-'80s stuff' credo Alex initially professes and the several English bands' names mentioned right after, the music surrounding him encompasses a few Marlene Kuntz songs heard where a voiceover description of Alex accompanies his bicycle journey home after the opening ('Canzone Di Domani'), and again towards the end, first as Alex practices his bass on 'Mala Mela' and later where 'Nuotando Nell'Aria' gives Alex and Aidi's last kiss a strange intensity. Alongside the Anglo-American bands who fit Alex's musical taste there are the two Pulp songs I discuss above (Britpop), Tricky's 'Overcome' scoring the scene where Alex and a band mate draw wall graffiti of Aidi's name in her neighbourhood (trip hop) and, after Martino's funeral, Alex and Aidi retreat to somewhere out of town in the hills where Alex plays Faith No More's 'Digging The Grave' on a portable stereo (heavy metal/hard rock). Similarly, and despite their genealogy, the Italian songs featuring in the film represent different faces of 1990s Italian rock, ranging from Marlene Kuntz's melodic indie tunes to CSI's oscillating between being introspective and angered, between melancholic and grating songs, while Umberto Palazzo e il Santo Niente's hard rock contrasts starkly against Üstmamò's quieter and contemplative songs about anguish and a woman's dilemma. All these choices add nuances to Alex's character and offer different soundtracks for his and his close friends' determination to avoid progressing towards prefabricated adulthood in the group, a message which, however dismissible as just wishful thinking, can encourage identifications for audiences outside the protagonist's age bracket. The rebellion Alex and his friends represent becomes defined through Italian

music whose roots are not exclusively outside the country, another element which marks their world as a component of 1990s Italian culture whose audiovisual representations are not totally reliant on a foreign musical idiom.

Overall, *Jack Frusciante*'s soundtrack finds new and old Anglo-American and Italian popular songs to shape not only a cinematic character but also a cultural identity Alex and his close friends embrace. But their cultural identity never becomes established as the prerogative of young audiences who would straightforwardly see and hear their own real world in the hopes and fears Alex, Aidi, and Martino share. Instead, the offer for audiences outside late-adolescence remains through the whole story and becomes chiefly articulated through the music they like, the songs scoring the highs and lows they go through, the bands Alex loves, the music playing where they hang out, and the songs Alex plays. Balotta Cocogena's own piece about being high even relates their amateur music to a wider context through the brief quotation of a lyric by Italian female rockstar Gianna Nannini, 'Questo amore è una finta sul ring' (this love is a feint[54] on the ring) from 'Fotoromanza', the piece that consecrated her success and won her a *Festivalbar*[55] in the summer of 1984 – yet another passing reference to 1980s Italian rock. Alex and his band mates never mention Nannini's music but, despite the few songs featuring women artists and the badly developed character Aidi remains until the end, the music surrounding the boys and the girls in the film is certainly not hard rock, and neither the songs surrounding Alex nor his behaviour are stereotypically masculine and about being a boorish boy.

Perhaps the other important element that makes *Jack Frusciante* a story for girls and women as well as boys and men is a greater theme whose reach means the story strikes a chord among wider audiences. Those anxieties about sacrificing one's youth for a pointless adulthood are not solely a teenage boy's concern that never haunts women and disappears after turning 30, and their relevance for adult women and men becomes the central theme for Gabriele Muccino's early films.[56] While a movie's theme can undoubtedly attract and put off different audiences, the music, as

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[54] The *Collins: English Dictionary* defines 'feint' as 'a misleading movement designed to distract an opponent, such as in boxing or fencing' <http://www.collinslanguage.com/results.aspx?context=3&reversed=False&action=define&homonym=1&text=feint> [Accessed 27 September 2010].

[55] *Festivalbar* is a music festival/contest touring various cities across Italy and featuring Italian and foreign artists. The whole event was televised and ran between 1964 and 2007 <http://www.festivalbar.it/storia/> [Accessed 27 September 2010].

[56] See, for example, *L'ultimo bacio* (*The Last Kiss*, 2001), *Ricordati di me* (*Remember Me*, 2003).

I hope to have demonstrated, enables invitations to produce identifications and permits identifications to occur despite being seemingly uninvited. If *Jack Frusciante* creates a narrative world where young and adult men and women can see and hear their stories, the music works towards providing audiences with paths into Alex's world. Italian popular music paves these paths alongside Anglo-American popular music, which means a story about being outside the group, about challenging the established notions surrounding 1990s Italian youth and adult culture can finally build its representations using Italian musical referents instead of relying on Anglo-American music alone. However, as the film studied below shows, Italian and Anglo-American popular music can encourage totally different identifications.

Radiofreccia
An Emilian Rocker Behind the Film Camera

The last film I will focus on perhaps constitutes an easy target for a project about film music, because the director, who wrote a few short stories and made them into a film for which he wrote and chose the music, is a well-known Italian rock singer-songwriter. However, while it might be quite obvious that the music is bound to play an essential role in a film directed by a rock singer-songwriter at his debut, the way the songs Luciano Ligabue chose and wrote for *Radiofreccia* (*Radio Arrow* 1998) earn their place in the foreground of the film and especially how these songs articulate the film world is not obvious at all.

Radiofreccia is the cinematic debut of Luciano Ligabue who, after several years spent in the limelight of the Italian rock scene was offered the opportunity to adapt his book, *Fuori e dentro il borgo* (In and out of the town) (1997) for the silver screen by Domenico Procacci's production company Fandango in collaboration with Medusa Film. The story begins with the last transmission of Radio Freccia, a small free radio station founded by Bruno (Luciano Federico) in the spring of 1975, which closes down one minute before celebrating its eighteenth birthday in 1993. Bruno tells the story of Ivan Benassi a.k.a. Freccia (Stefano Accorsi) and his other friends through a flashback from the day Freccia was found dead in a ditch after overdosing

on heroin and from the day of his funeral, to the two years prior to his death. Freccia had tried heroin and got clean after a short but difficult spell of addiction. However, he had fallen in love with a girl who rejected him, and fallen back into heroin one last fatal time. The film is set in Correggio, a small town in the north of Italy, hometown of Ligabue himself. Freccia, Bruno, Tito (Enrico Salimbeni), Boris (Roberto Zibetti), and Iena (Alessio Modica) hang out at Bar Laika, the café run by Adolfo (Francesco Guccini), where one day they hear the music played by a local free radio station. Having heard that all you need is some cheap equipment, Bruno decides to start his own station. Through Radio Raptus (renamed Radiofreccia after Freccia's death) Bruno finds a way of expressing himself, talking about what matters to him and especially playing the records he – and eventually the other friends – want people to hear. The stories of the five friends unfold through two difficult years spent searching for their place in the limbo between their late teens and the beginning of adult life. In that search, in that unstable time of their lives, their songs represent a point of reference and, for some of them more than for others, a means to express their cultural identity.

The fact that *Radiofreccia*'s rock soundtrack is allowed to perform these functions the way it does depends on the place the music has in the filmic narrative. Music is not only aurally present through the nineteen songs and the instrumental cues Ligabue recorded for the score. It is also visually present through the ubiquitous radio tuners, record players, and tape recorders that are often shown in the frame and sometimes highlighted through close-ups as the sources of several songs heard in the film world. It emerges through a few posters featuring, for example, the black and white picture of James Brown behind the counter of Bar Laika and the picture of Bob Dylan that appears on the cover of *Desire* (1976) on the walls of the headquarters of Radio Raptus, where we also see a copy of Neil Young's *On the Beach* (1974) sitting on the floor. Music becomes visible again through the protagonists' own records, which are shown as Freccia, Tito, Boris, and Iena lend them to Bruno to play on Radio Raptus.

The posters and the records deserve a brief aside. The selection of what is shown but not heard seems to place those appearances in a larger strategy of compensation for the absence of those songs the production could not pay for. Ligabue himself talks about how the selection of the songs was limited for budgetary

reasons. Furthermore, a review of the soundtrack album reveals that the song in the funeral sequence was meant to be 'Satisfaction' by the Rolling Stones, but that the publisher who owns the rights for the song had asked for a ludicrous sum of money (Campanini 1998). Besides being shown and heard, music is often discussed by *Radiofreccia*'s protagonists, and songs are a recurrent topic for conversation among Freccia and his friends. For example, at the beginning of the film Creedence Clearwater Revival's 'Run Through the Jungle' is heard in Bar Laika when Bruno asks Adolfo if it is the RAI[57] he is listening to and Adolfo replies that it is a local free radio station, Radio King, and that these 'also play soul, not just Wilson Pickett at *Sanremo*'.[58] Right after, when Iena says he likes the RAI his statement elicits a sighing choir of 'Eh, we know Iena, we know'. Finally, when Bruno and Freccia discuss their respective musical preferences, Freccia tells Bruno he likes his idea of the radio and he is a good presenter, but he does not like the music he plays, to which Bruno replies by suggesting everybody bring in their records so they stop criticising him. All these conversations about musical taste construct the role of music in the narrative, establishing the distinction between RAI and free radio as well as between musical genres as signifiers of different cultural identities to which the protagonists affiliate themselves and through which they indeed define themselves. The way the aural, visual, and narrative presence of music is articulated through all these aspects leads to the issue of how music defines the characters' cultural identities in *Radiofreccia* – an issue I will explore in the following pages.

The way the music becomes essential to the film beyond the songs, the visuals, and the dialogues, is a matter for further consideration. The fact that there is a rock singer-songwriter behind the film camera places the soundtrack in the foreground for several reasons. First, Ligabue's background was central to the promotion for *Radiofreccia*, which, I would argue, helps foreground the soundtrack for those audience members who where exposed to the media hype that surrounded the release of the film in Italy, when *Radiofreccia* was often defined as 'the debut film by singer Luciano Ligabue' and his musical background was emphasized in film reviews featuring titles such as 'Può un cantante essere anche regista?: Ligabue, alla

[57] The official broadcasting agency of the Italian government.
[58] The Sanremo Festival is a song contest for Italian artists, but featuring prominent foreign guest artists who are, however, not allowed to participate. The greatly popular event takes place yearly since 1950 at the Ariston theatre in the Ligurian town of Sanremo between February and March.

sua prima prova registica, confeziona un film niente male' (Can a singer be a director, too?: Ligabue, at his first directing trial, puts together a pretty good film) (Campanini 1998). Furthermore, Ligabue himself supported the foregrounding of the soundtrack by talking about the place of music in the film, which he defined in an interview as 'parte integrante della narrazione, non poteva essere altrimenti in un film in cui si parla di radio libere' (an integral part of the narration; it could not have been otherwise in a film about free radios) (quoted in Taccone 1998). I would add that it could not have been otherwise in a film directed by a musician, and would go so far as to argue that in a film written and directed by a musician songs are highly likely to be given a prominent place, both because they represent the director's preferred means of expression and because they are perceived as such, and therefore given special attention. For all these paratextual reasons the songs Ligabue chose and wrote for *Radiofreccia* are bound to be integral to his narrative style.

However, not only is Ligabue present in the discourse about his debut film. He is also aurally and visually present in the film itself, which further foregrounds the music as a narrative element and establishes links between director and protagonists. The obvious manifestation of his aural signature is the credits' track, 'Ho Perso le Parole', which, as credits' songs often do, works as a musical epilogue whose lyrical content represents a closing comment about the story. Through 'Ho Perso le Parole' Ligabue audibly takes over the narrative voice and leads the story to a final reflection. But Ligabue's voice is heard a lot earlier in the film. He stars as the presenter of Radio King, the first free radio Bruno hears in Bar Laika at the beginning of the story. First we hear his voice on the radio in Bar Laika. Right after, we see him through the admiring eyes of the protagonists when the five friends go to spy on the presenter of Radio King at work. This is the only time we see Ligabue in the film, but what this cameo appearance does is rather important. It identifies Bruno and the other characters who become involved in free radios with Ligabue. Through the protagonists-director connection audiences are invited to identify with these characters, rather than with those who are not interested in the free radios. Their connection is reinforced by the other aural manifestation. After Boris tells Bruno what he thinks of 'those like him' Bruno replies 'those like me tell those like you to fuck off' and Tito says 'those like me, too'. The voice that utters these few words is not Tito's, but Ligabue's. This minimal vocal intrusion, despite not being

immediately obvious, can still, if noticed, strengthen the connection between the certain characters and the director. Through his voice, Ligabue sides with Bruno, Freccia, and Tito. The following section is going to focus on the musical aspects of the soundtrack and return, as promised, to how music defines the characters' cultural identities in *Radiofreccia*.

The article entitled 'Radio Freccia di Ligabue: il film, il libro e le altre storie' (Ligabue's Radio Freccia: the film, the book and the other stories), published on the website www.italica.rai.it, features a few interesting remarks about the soundtrack, which require further comment:

> 'Rock e cinema è un connubio già sperimentato da altre cinematografie e che ora si arricchisce di un capitolo tutto italiano grazie al coraggio del produttore Domenico Procacci e all'«incoscienza» della rockstar Luciano Ligabue. Radiofreccia è il primo film italiano che racconta una storia tutta rock.'
> (Rock and cinema is a union already experimented in other cinemas and now it's enriched by an all Italian chapter thanks to the courage of producer Domenico Procacci and to the «recklessness» of rockstar Luciano Ligabue. Radiofreccia is the first Italian film to tell an all rock story)
>
> (*Italica*)

Radiofreccia is not exactly the first Italian film featuring a rock soundtrack, (see Chapter One). Furthermore, *Radiofreccia* is not exactly all-Italian, especially if one considers the music. Sixteen out of the nineteen songs are English-language songs, by American, Canadian, and British artists. The songs perform 'classical' tasks, such as setting the time period, articulating the narrative through words and music, leading a few pivotal sequences, etc. However, the widespread presence of English-language songs in a non-English-language film where music plays such a crucial – and undoubtedly audible – role poses several challenging questions regarding the negotiation of the protagonists' cultural identities. The way the music earns its place in the foreground of the narrative articulates its role as a signifier of cultural identity. Since this function of popular film music is not mentioned by its detractors I would like to focus on a few examples in order to illustrate how *Radiofreccia*'s period soundtrack represents more than just 'a facile, head-on assault upon the viewer's emotions' (Hope 2005, p. 20).

The dominance of English-language songs may raise the problem of how these songs serve as signifiers of cultural identity for the characters of a film set in

1970s small-town Italy. The obvious explanation is that this kind of music was a familiar presence in the musical landscape of the years when free radio stations were spreading. Ligabue talks about it extensively, not without calling for not-exactly-defined ideas of authenticity, in *Fuori e dentro il borgo*, and he evokes the imaginary place he calls 'Ameribassa',[59] where there are people and venues that 'love blues and the forms of rock strictly annexed to it' (1997, p. 120). A further explanation is that the relationship between the world inhabited by the characters and the songs is built through a careful weaving of popular music in the filmic narrative. *Radiofreccia* represents these signifiers of a 'foreign' culture – Anglo-American popular music culture as well as Anglo-American film culture – as naturalised elements in the local culture, appropriated by the characters in the construction of their cultural identities and therefore offered to Italian audiences as a potential element of their culture. The first cue represents a perfect example of the appropriation of a celebrated piece.

''Can't Help Falling in Love', il pezzo con cui Elvis chiudeva i suoi concerti' ('Can't Help Falling in Love', the piece with which Elvis used to close his concerts), as Bruno introduces it at the beginning of the film, is performed by the town's marching band at Freccia's funeral procession and represents our first audiovisual experience of the past Bruno is recalling. We hear the voice of the band director as he gives the time in dialect, cross-faded with Bruno's last words before we even see him in the close-up that moves to a strange perpendicular overhead shot. The unusual angle makes it look like it might be some kind of heavenly point of view shot open to different interpretations – Freccia's father from the other side? Elvis?[60] The whole funeral procession parades through the overhead shot, which then moves back to show the empty streets of Correggio as the music gradually fades out, a white light flashes, and the story begins as we hear Freccia's voice talking to his dead father on the way to the cemetery where he is buried – perhaps the same cemetery where Freccia will be buried. The way the appropriation works seems quite obvious. A celebrated Elvis piece appears rearranged by and in the style of the kind of town band that represents a familiar presence in the small-town musical landscape where the story takes place. Bruno's comment establishes 'Can't Help Falling in Love' as a farewell song, which is the piece's obvious function in the first occurrence of the

[59] 'Ameribassa' is the union of America and the regional term 'la bassa' (the lowland) which is often how people refer to the plain.
[60] Incidentally, Elvis Presley also died in 1977.

funeral sequence. By the time of its second occurrence at the end of the film we know that Freccia was an Elvis fan and that falling in love with a girl who did not love him brought him to the last fatal dose of heroin, which makes 'Can't Help Falling in Love' a celebration of Freccia's passion for rock and establishes a connection between the title and Freccia's penultimate mistake.

Radiofreccia establishes a strange union between the local culture of the setting and the culture of the Other – largely represented by America, and especially its popular music and film culture – that becomes localised through the way the protagonists appropriate it. The appropriation described above works the other way around when Kingo (Davide Tavernelli), the local foolish Elvis impersonator who specialises in wedding entertainment, performs at Iena's wedding reception. Kingo plays 'Coccinella', a quite stereotypical 1950s rock 'n' roll song with lyrics in Italian, while dancing and hopping on the tables, pulling a few handkerchiefs out of his y-fronts, and threatening a striptease. His performance is clearly amateurish, outlandish, and foolish. Nonetheless, his shows represent his own idiosyncratic impersonation and, I would argue, his appropriation of The King – hence, perhaps, Kingo. At the same time, Kingo and the other village idiots are vaguely reminiscent of those roaming the streets of Fellini's Rimini in *Amarcord* (*I Remember*, 1973).

The world of *Radiofreccia* is suspended between a quasi Fellinian underworld inhabited by village idiots and improbable animals and the sports bar microcosm where famous singer-songwriter Francesco Guccini stars as the bar owner who listens to free radio stations behind the counter in the small town. It is a world where the broad accents of the area north of Reggio Emilia talk about rock, where Kingo shows up at the bar in his glittering golden Elvis-like suit and says 'I'm not dressed like Elvis, I'm dressed like Kingo', and Bonanza (Manuel Maggioli), the local 'cinemaniac', wanders about at night dressed up like the Berbers he has seen in *The Wind and the Lion* (*Il Vento e il Leone*, John Milius 1975), scaring off passers-by. But it is also a world where the five friends nurture their passion for football and find their voice through rock, struggle to make ends meet and deal with difficult family scenarios, and shift from being close friends to hurting one another and themselves in the process.

Freccia talks about his world and his beliefs halfway through the film in the legendary night radio scene, which is preceded by Bachman Turner Overdrive's

'You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet' and followed by David Bowie's 'Rebel Rebel'. These two songs frame this pivotal scene, switching between dramatic and source scoring to take us from Bar Laika to the headquarters of Radio Raptus and back to the night out at the end of which Freccia tries heroin for the first time. 'You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet' starts as dramatic scoring at Bar Laika, and becomes source music on the cut to the medium shot of Freccia smoking on his bed as the chorus is heard, as if to anticipate what Freccia has on his mind right before he switches the microphone on. At the end of the scene Freccia plays 'Rebel Rebel', which immediately changes to dramatic scoring on the cut to the beginning of the night-out montage. The chorus of 'Rebel Rebel' seems to provide a bitter-ironic commentary about Freccia's heroin initiation towards the end of the cue. The dramatic parts of these two songs are mixed with source sound from the film world, as are all the other dramatic songs in the film.

The other songs associated with Freccia are interwoven in the filmic narrative through a variety of strategies. Bruno plays Lynyrd Skynyrd's 'Sweet Home Alabama' on Radio Raptus at the request of Freccia. Initially heard on Freccia's car radio tuner, the cue shifts to an indefinite place between dramatic scoring and source scoring. By the end of the montage sequence the sun has set and risen again while the song is still heard as if it were coming out of a badly tuned radio, suspended between the inside and the outside of the filmic dimension. Lou Reed's 'Vicious', on the other hand, is clearly dramatic throughout the cue, but again carefully foregrounded. The piece accompanies Freccia's reactions after he comes home to his mother (Serena Grandi) and her new partner having sex behind her half-open bedroom doors. The start matches Freccia head butting his mother's partner after their umpteenth quarrel and the word 'vicious' matches the close-up of Freccia followed by a close-up of his mother angrily looking at him, highlighted by the quick buzz of the electric guitar. Furthermore, the lyrical element – the words and especially Lou Reed's lascivious vocal performance – offers a rather ironic commentary on the narrative, perhaps even to those spectators whose grasp of English is not great, because a few words[61] and Lou Reed's vocal performance alone might suffice to offer a general sense about the

[61] 'Vicious / You hit me with a flower / You do it every hour / Oh, baby you're so vicious // Vicious / You want me to hit you with a stick / But all I've got's a guitar pick / Huh... baby you're so vicious // When I watch you come / Baby I just wanna run far away / You're not the kind of person / Around whom I wanna stay'.

message. After the legendary night radio scene there are another three songs related to Freccia. The Doobie Brothers' 'Long Train Running' is the dramatic cue scoring the jewellery robbery. Once again, the lyrical element seems to provide a bitterly ironic commentary on both Freccia's and Tito's situations, as the lines 'without love where would you be now' occur several times on the montage and voice-over narration of how Freccia got caught robbing a jewellery and began his odyssey in and out of jails and hospitals, and of Tito's confusion on the day of his release from jail returning to the house where he had attempted to kill his father, whom he had caught raping his sister. Iggy Pop's 'The Passenger' accompanies Freccia on his search for Cristina (Cristina Moglia) – the girl who does not love him – who was earlier introduced through a montage sequence to the sound of Roxy Music's 'Love Is the Drug' – another lyrical reference to the filmic narrative.

Before moving on to 'The Passenger' I would like to focus on the only song that follows a female character, Roxy Music's 'Love Is The Drug'. Among the few women present in *Radiofreccia*, Cristina is the only one to have her own song accompanying her throughout the montage where the voiceover narrator talks about her place in Freccia's story. While the other women sometimes enter the frame in the middle of a song, these appearances can never claim the music for their character the way Cristina's introduction does. She is the unreachable one Freccia falls for, a chapter vaguely sketched by Bruno as he talks about their ephemeral but intense relationship while brief shots portray them happily together until she coldly kisses Freccia on the cheek, enters her house, shortly after exits again and gets into some other man's convertible outside her house. The music accompanies the whole montage, opens on an introductory shot where a white beauty pageant sash for 'Miss Carpi '77' (Carpi, a wealthy small town in the neighbouring province of Modena, is Cristina's hometown) is shown suspended against a background of white clouds in a blue sky, and fades out as Cristina walks towards the other man's car. The piece generally remains aurally subordinate to Bruno's voiceover narration, and yet 'Love Is the Drug' emerges between Bruno's words, its title and few other lines clearly heard, which makes its lyrical relevance discernible. Roxy Music's piece is lyrically significant to Freccia's situation for several reasons. His crush on Cristina and his temporarily cured drug addiction finally overlap, driving him towards the lethal heroin overdose he later takes after Cristina's umpteenth rejection and, while the

obvious lyrical premonition comes to mind, there is another interesting implication to 'Love Is the Drug'.

Bruno's voiceover narration warns about Cristina being out of Freccia's league, but the song goes further, warning against the dangers Freccia's new addiction can bring. The piece remains quite obviously dramatic since the aural perspective stays unchanged throughout the cue, but the match between Bruno's warning about Cristina and the warning against 'love' Bryan Ferry sings about can place the narrator and the dramatic soundtrack at a similar narrative vantage point from which Bruno's voice and Bryan Ferry's construct Cristina as the trigger to the vicious circle that later results in Freccia's death. 'Love is the Drug' becomes the narrative gesture that, man to man, warns Freccia from outside the film world about how dangerous Cristina is. Bruno's voiceover narration carries out a similar function from somewhere between the film world and its outside where the dramatic song is. Bruno's double role as a character present in the film world and the narrator positions him somewhere between the dimension where Roxy Music enter the narrative process and the film world where Freccia and Cristina are shown going through the key moments of their brief romance. The way the few audible lines Bryan Ferry sings and Bruno's voiceover words are heard conveying a similar message at the same time unveils the narrative power music holds in *Radiofreccia*, and again the links between Ligabue's appearances as the DJ of a free radio station in the film and Bruno's involvement in Radio Raptus/Freccia, and Ligabue's real life position as songwriter-turned-director can suggest interpretations of 'Love Is the Drug' as an obvious directorial narrative gesture. Bruno's twofold position as a character and as the narrating voice positions his voiceover narration not quite outside the film world, opening a passage between the two different kinds of outer dimension in which Bruno's voice and Bryan Ferry's comment on the film world. Because their words are reiterating a similar warning message, 'Love Is the Drug' could be heard as another voice in the narration, drawing the dramatic soundtrack close to the perspective of Bruno's narrating character's. If Ligabue's day job as a singer-songwriter hints towards songs being significant narrative devices for him as a director, we can perhaps see how 'Love Is the Drug' can act as a vehicle for his involvement as a kind of shadow narrator, neither visible nor audible, but who

deploys songs to bolster the narrating character's message as well as to offer clues about where Freccia's infatuation is leading.

Interestingly, Bruno's voiceover narration, the audible lyrical content, and the *mise-en-scène* in the montage all construct Cristina as the trigger to Freccia's final death. Bruno talks about how Freccia had lost his head for the beautiful and unreachable Cristina, Ferry sings the first few lines, which are about waiting for a desired someone and feeling aggravated, and culminate on the clearly audible 'Love is the drug and I need to score' as Cristina walks towards the other man's car. The initial and final images accompanying these lines portray her as the one who calls the shots, not Freccia. Throughout the montage Cristina wears something bright red, whether lipstick or clothes, which can symbolise the desire she elicits, the quasi demonic spell she casts on Freccia, and the danger she brings – the only scene where Cristina is not wearing anything red is Freccia's funeral procession, where her black clothes and make-up-less face contrast with previous appearances and loosely fit the traditional iconography of Italian women in mourning rather than the image she had throughout. Red becomes Cristina's trademark earlier where Freccia watches her leave Iena's wedding reception driving her red car, a beautiful Alfa Romeo Duetto convertible – a premonition of Cristina's elusiveness and power over Freccia. An extreme close up of Cristina's cherry red lips opens the montage, followed by a medium point of view shot showing her on top of Freccia holding him still – a clear depiction of Cristina's power. However, she briefly loses all these symbols of superiority and power after sex, where she first appears without lipstick or red clothes, covered by floral sheets, initially awake and later asleep next to Freccia. After the initial point of view shot, Cristina and Freccia are shown on the same level in natural light, but the last kiss happens at night outside her house, where she is presumably standing on the step of her front door, higher than Freccia, already distant and again showing control. In the last kiss scene she wears a red jacket and shortly after she walks out towards the other man's car wearing a red dress. Freccia calls her using his red telephone, which he angrily knocks off the table after she stops answering his calls. Right after she rejects his courtship there are a few hints about his forthcoming death.

After the 'Love Is the Drug' montage and the following scene where he obsessively calls Cristina on the phone, Freccia engages in a toy gun shoot out *à la*

High Noon with town fool Bonanza outside Bar Laika. Freccia makes him shoot first for the sake of earning everybody a victory drink on Bonanza, and after the crowd disperses empties out Tito and Freccia start talking. When Tito asks how his life is going, Freccia replies 'Bad, I'm dead', at first obviously for a laugh, but after Tito continues 'Don't be silly, I'm being serious', Freccia looks him in the eye and tells him he is being serious, too. Later as he talks about Cristina to Marzia (Patrizia Piccinini), the woman who saw him through his heroin detoxification, he says 'It is as if I had to detox from something else', echoing the few lines of 'Love Is the Drug' clearly heard in the montage a few minutes earlier. Overall, the women who surround Freccia are quite briefly represented as either angels – Marzia – or demons – his mother, the blonde who offers him heroin, and Cristina. The one woman who earns her own fragment of a song is constructed as the principal trigger for Freccia's final fatal mistake, which sadly follows other Manichean representations where non-subservient females get the blame for the man's misfortunes.

As Cristina is likened to heroin, Freccia's new addiction becomes obvious and 'The Passenger' accompanies the montage where the scale of Cristina's influence becomes clear, providing further insight about his inner turmoil. The four chords repeated throughout the cue haunt Freccia, like a musical representation of his obsession with Cristina, which he eventually tries to chase off and, interestingly, the cue comprises the piece's initial section but not the point where the key changes and the music takes a different direction. Initially, the cue seems obviously dramatic as it is heard on the montage featuring non-sequential shots of Freccia searching for Cristina and the point of audition does not shift between shots. Furthermore, towards the end the score gives way to the dialogue between Freccia and Iena. However, the place of 'The Passenger' becomes ambiguous as Freccia shuts off the music by putting his hands on his ears while we see him from behind, smoking a cigarette and sitting cross-legged on the ground between Cristina's car and his own. The way the cue stops seems to suggest it might be what Gorbman (1987) defines as metadiegetic, which applies where 'wordlessly [the character] "takes over" part of the film's narration and we are privileged to hear his musical thoughts' (p. 23). I would propose 'inner scoring' as a better term to describe the place of the music in these cases. Later, 'Ho Perso le Parole' begins as, again, we see Freccia from behind, smoking a cigarette, his last cigarette, sitting cross-legged in a field between the two cars he

stole to try to impress Cristina and then set on fire. Again we see him putting his hands on his ears, but this time his gesture comes right before the vocals begin, as if the song were playing in his head and he did not want to hear the words.

All these songs are powerfully present in the filmic narrative. When they play in the filmic world the characters use them to reach where the words cannot, to tell the world around them something about themselves. When they are not heard in the filmic world they are nonetheless woven in the filmic narrative, telling something about the characters who inhabit it, about their inner world, about the culture that permeates their world – for Freccia, a culture of rock and rebellion that emerges through the music that surrounds him, the songs that haunt him, the words that add irony and those that close the story. Despite the gradual dissolution of their world, of which first Freccia's death and several years later Radio Raptus's closure are clear symbols, Freccia and his close friends share a cultural identity constructed chiefly through Anglo-American popular music, and yet clearly presented as a voicing of their world. *Radiofreccia* does not use a foreign musical world to paste charm and emotion on its small-town story. Popular music in this film is not a foreign sound given to us by a foreign voice. It is an Emilian radio playing rock. Music 'plays' their different cultural identity in the film world and becomes a component of their cultural identity at the same time. Despite their world's final demise, Anglo-American popular music becomes adopted as a component of Italy's musical landscape through being presented as their music.

Conclusion

The three films I have analysed in this chapter use popular songs extensively to construct a narrative world where surface differences point towards wider paths for identifications and where intersections between the popular music texts of different countries and a given character's stand vis-à-vis the surrounding culture can voice their cultural identity beneath the national identity films are often assumed to express. The assertive females Romeo finds along the way in *Sono pazzo di Iris Blond* perform and write songs using foreign languages and a non-Italian music

genre, which positions these women outside the dominant culture. The songs Marguerite and Iris perform are the vehicle for their achievement of a certain charm initially. However, their songs later serve as the sites where their descent unfolds – quickly for Marguerite where she gives her quite awkward performance of 'The Show Must Go On' and gradually for Iris who, after a few minor musical slips, deserts Romeo and stops writing her own songs after a promise of money and international success comes her way. The way these women are represented makes their characters interesting but ultimately unappealing, for Romeo, again through music, regains the narrative power he relinquishes to women throughout the story. The songs map the assertive females outside the Italian culture presented in the film, deterring audiences from identifications with Marguerite and Iris where music compromises their credibility.

In *Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo* the songs surrounding its young protagonist and his close friends offer a point of entry for audiences who lie outside Alex's immediate character constellation. Through its music, a story about a young man who wonders whether there are alternative paths besides jumping through hoops towards a predictable humdrum adulthood opens its doors for wider audiences. Despite not venturing too far beyond rock music, the soundtrack features old and new Italian and Anglo-American bands, including few women, but there are several bands whose songs are outside the stereotypically heavy macho music surrounding Carlos and his friends are defined through in *Historias del Kronen*, for example. The comparatively wider musical variety present in the film, in which Alex, Aidi, and Martino represent the Other for a society where growing up to be a predetermined industrious adult constitutes the model everybody follows, makes identifications towards their positions available for wider audiences, aurally debunking the expectation of a teenage story for teenagers alone and not for adult audiences. Where *Trainspotting* marks its junkies and the non-junkies apart using American and British music correspondingly, and *Historias del Kronen* and *Krámpack* use English-language songs performed by Spanish and British bands for every character who threatens the patriarchal order, *Jack Frusciante* finds a variety of Italian songs for those outside the group, situating their non-acquiescent stand vis-à-vis society's unwritten rules in the Italian cinematic landscape.

Finally, in *Radiofreccia* the protagonist and his friends embed Anglo-American rock music in the film world as the voice for those who share a sense of dissatisfaction about the provincial mindset and RAI's scant musical offerings. The songs they play on their free radio and those surrounding Freccia and his close friends, however, are never constructed as foreign, but are quickly established as a component of their lives, expressions of their distinctive culture as opposed to that of their other mates, who are happily settling in their comfortable adult lives and listening to RAI's inoffensive tunes. While these songs are not perceived as 'Italian popular music', their pervasiveness and the way music becomes tightly woven into the narrative makes them 'popular music *in* Italy' at least. Looking at *Radiofreccia* without hearing its world as a clear manifestation of a nascent culture, in which Anglo-American music becomes adopted and defines its members against their other peers, would produce a partial understanding of a film where music remains a key narrative element throughout the story. These songs offer identifications whereby Anglo-American popular music invites audiences to enter their world because the protagonist and his close friends amply display their closeness to a musical tradition that, despite coming from another country, effectively becomes their own music through their passion as amateur radio enthusiasts.

Interestingly, while Freccia and his friends appropriate Anglo-American popular music for the purpose of voicing their cultural identity vis-à-vis the surrounding dominant culture in 1970s Correggio, there are several Italian songs available for the cultural identity Alex and his friends represent in the urban setting of 1990s Bologna. Considering which music accompanies those who represent a culture outside the prefabricated paths allowed in the dimension where their story takes place can offer a wider perspective on the place their culture has in the film world and the audiences the film interpellates. Where songs, films, books, and other popular culture texts feature in the films we watch, enjoy, despise, and write about, the threads these weave into their narrative fabric are a fundamental element of a narrative world we enter or perhaps avoid based on the visuals, the dialogues, the sound, and the music. Whether knowingly or unknowingly, music and the broad meaning constellation songs and all other popular culture texts can evoke, greatly condition the way audiences negotiate films, are drawn towards certain identifications and through these, through the film world, rethink their own world.

Hearing songs as fundamental narrative threads alongside the visuals and the dialogues in the films I analyse above has allowed for a perspective on cultural identities which I believe remains largely precluded without considering films' soundtracks in their audiovisual context.

CHAPTER FIVE
Conclusion

In the following pages I will reflect on the textual journey through the nine films I analyse in this thesis and offer a few final suggestions about how the project contributes to the study of film and popular music. In this thesis I have begun to explore film as a textual field where aural and visual narrative threads intersect, and offer positions through which audiences can negotiate cultural identities inside and outside the dominant national culture. Furthermore, I have begun to explore the identifications popular films featuring compilation soundtracks can offer beyond a national identity – a combination of areas traditionally neglected in the disciplines the project straddles.

Alongside the initial concern about considering films as audiovisual media in order to address the imbalance film studies has perpetuated for decades, I tried to address another imbalance in the field of film music studies by selecting films where popular songs feature prominently. As illustrated in Chapter One, film music scholarship struggled to acknowledge the aesthetic specificity of compilation soundtracks until the late 1990s. The combination of a focus predominantly on films featuring a composed score, on the one hand, and studies on the soundtracks of either Hollywood productions or the European auteur tradition, on the other, has meant that films outside these two categorisations have been routinely ignored in film music scholarship. Outside the European auteur tradition there are films that have been written out not only of film music scholarship but also of most accounts of the given nations' cinemas. While films outside the national cinematic canon are often mentioned – and now and again written about quite extensively – alongside canonised British, Spanish, and Italian films, questions about who these films can represent, which audiences are interpellated and how, are not yet being fully addressed through a careful integration of soundtracks in the scholarly discourse about films. In the nine films I analysed in the three central chapters, popular songs are woven into the narrative and 'play different cultural formations inside and outside the nations available in the film world. The way songs enter and inhabit each film's textual field, negotiating their meaning against other factors, positions the

cultural identities that songs construct on the map where the dominant national culture's borders are drawn.

In this final chapter I propose to reflect on the key ideas discussed in Chapter One and offer a few closing reflections about the central areas that the thesis has addressed. In Chapter One, I defined 'cultural identities' and explained the reasons for wanting a broad concept to refer to diverse categories ranging from conscious choices (for example, using drugs) to gender and class positions. Using malleable – and therefore potentially problematic – terminology was intentional, since a broad designation such as 'cultural identities' could stretch to accommodate the different kinds of groupings represented in the nine films. Despite my focus on their being defined along non-place-bound lines, I have tried to analyse these diverse cultural identities in the national contexts in which they exist in the films. As Ian Biddle and Vanessa Knights observe in their preface to *Music, National Identity and the Politics of Location*, 'the nation […] remains a crucial but ambivalent category for understanding how cultural texts and practices function in the construction of personal and collective identities.' (2007, p. 1). While the films I analysed in this thesis construct a different micro-culture through their soundtracks, often starkly opposed to their predominant national identity, the textual materials songs carry 'play' differences into the films, and the songs' narrative treatment positions these differences somewhere between the inside and the outside of the predominant macro-culture, therefore reinstating national identity as a frame of reference in which every micro-culture positions its members. I have tried not only to allow cultural identities to be heard through the baggage of meaning different songs bring to a film's textual field, but also to follow cultural identities through their narrative evolution and their positioning on the map where the predominant culture draws its borders. The nine films I analysed all construct different cultural identities through their soundtracks' pre-cinematic baggage – which I refer to as primary meaning – but, through their use in the film narrative, songs can acquire further meaning, heavily dependent on every musical piece's pre-cinematic meaning as well as on the interaction between music and other narrative factors in the film's textual field – which I refer to as secondary meaning. I hope to have shown that films made in a given national cultural context often use their soundtracks as a major route for introducing textual materials to build cultural identities other than the predominant national identity, which, nonetheless,

remains a crucial frame of reference where interactions between music and other textual materials situate cultural identities and their members.

Considering the soundtracks – the musical partition of *Trainspotting*'s world between junkies and non-junkies, the way jobless men reclaim their empty factory through 'black' music instead of a traditional brass band in *The Full Monty*, and the feuding sides music defines in *Twin Town*, setting apart the wealthy and the disadvantaged – opens new possibilities for understanding how identifications develop through songs as much as through the visuals and dialogue. Songs painstakingly map these opposing cultures in the films and add further meaning through the pre-cinematic and narratively constructed relationships between musical groupings in ways that dialogue and the visuals alone could not evoke as effectively.

These differences are often defined through the artists' nationalities among other factors. In *Trainspotting*, the songs and artists that symbolise the junkies' world do not only represent heroin use, but also US culture, whereas all the other bands are British. Similarly, the resourceful jobless men in *The Full Monty* reconstruct their lives after the factory closure using songs predominantly by black artists, including several women, and chiefly US singers, while the few remaining working men are shown playing in the brass band – a distinctively British, predominantly white working-class institution. In *Twin Town*, the songs marking the twins and their entourage are either examples of current English and Welsh popular music or traditional Welsh music, whereas their enemies' songs are all international successes of a recent past predominantly by English singers.

Music defines different groupings in the film world and, alongside other narrative factors, articulates the relationship among their members, positioning their cultural identities somewhere between the inside and the outside of the national culture represented as the dominant one in the film world. All three soundtracks construct the 'regular' culture (non-junkies, working men, wealthy) through British, often predominantly English popular music, while the 'irregular' culture (junkies, jobless, disadvantaged) becomes defined through the Other's music, often related to nations other than the nation where the films are set. The Otherness these songs represent and the nations their origins evoke are not consistently foregrounded in the narrative, nor do they always straightforwardly represent the culture the films construct, and their familiarity can attenuate their Otherness. Nonetheless, these

songs related to another culture, whether outside or inside Britain, can construct cultural identities as the Other of dominant ideas of Britishness in the film. Furthermore, where the 'irregular' culture, the Other, manages to survive, through a tentatively inclusive renewal process (*The Full Monty*) or through revenge on the old enemy (*Twin Town*), the 'irregular' culture's continued existence legitimises its members – however shakily, as illustrated in the section on *The Full Monty*. Further narrative factors can undermine instances where music legitimises the 'irregular' culture, but I believe considering soundtracks enables a reading where these narrative processes are charted and can therefore influence how films are thought and written about.

While mapping these processes in the British films I analysed in this thesis has not always been a straightforward process, detecting the differences music 'plays' in the other films studied was initially simpler. The Otherness songs bring to *Historias del Kronen*, *Barrio*, and *Krámpack* is often audibly articulated through foreign languages (i.e. not Spanish), as well as through Anglo-American and Latin American music and musical influences. Again, these songs designate the 'irregular' culture (different threats to patriarchal norms, the disadvantaged who try leaving their neighbourhood and challenging their marginalisation).

Historias del Kronen's gay character timidly 'comes out' and expresses himself accompanied by ballads in English, but elsewhere hides beneath hard rock in Spanish, and the troublesome girls are, too, defined through other songs in English. *Barrio*'s Latin American songs accompany the hopeful moments when three disadvantaged teenagers dream about and are shown working towards evading their rundown neighbourhood, but those songs later disappear, and Spanish hip hop and rock take over as their harsh reality becomes painfully obvious. In *Krámpack*, another young gay character defined through ballads in English experiences the first rejection after his infatuation for his straight friend, whose performance of heterosexual masculinity is accompanied by the one Spanish-language song in the film. Again, all three films construct the 'regular' culture (patriarchal rules and heteronormativity, the disadvantaged finally contained in the harsh reality of their neighbourhood) through songs by Spanish bands performed in Spanish – all instances of a Spanish incarnation of an Anglo-American musical genre – while the 'irregular' culture becomes defined through the Other's music, related to other

geographical regions (the Anglophone world and Latin America). These songs 'play' audible and visible Otherness in the film narrative, often highlighted through music-related visuals and conversations about music, but the Other place-bound culture the songs may represent on the surface never comes to represent the 'irregular' culture without first acquiring further meaning in the film.

Finally, the Italian films I analysed in Chapter Four feature audibly and visibly non-Italian musical materials, and the 'irregular' culture the films construct (troublesome females, non-acquiescent youth) is defined predominantly through non-Italian songs in other languages. Troublesome females never perform songs in Italian in *Sono pazzo di Iris Blond*, but the non-acquiescent youth who challenge predetermined paths in *Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo* are accompanied by equal numbers of songs by Italian and Anglo-American bands, old and new, while *Radiofreccia* shows a predominantly Anglo-American musical landscape.

The 'regular' culture often remains without music, but where its members are defined through songs these are usually not only Italian, but also performed by popular singers of a recent past, both real (Adamo and Mino Reitano) and fictional (Romeo). The 'irregular' culture, however, sometimes finds Italian music for its members, who are defined in *Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo* through the songs of a cluster of related bands revolving around Consorzio Suonatori Indipendenti and their earlier incarnation CCCP, which feature alongside songs by Anglo-American bands. The protagonist's world takes a few blows (his friend's suicide and his girlfriend's departure for the US) and Alex finally remains alone, but these songs construct the 'irregular' culture as a surviving component of the dominant national culture. Despite being outsiders, Alex and his friends are not exclusively represented through non-Italian songs, while Iris never sings Italian songs, and Radio Freccia never plays Italian songs.

The way the 'irregular' culture is sometimes defined through Italian and non-Italian songs, I argue, can produce a two-way audiovisual remapping. This involves the 'irregular' culture being musically articulated through songs by Italian bands, on the one hand, and Anglo-American music being presented as a vital component of a culture posited as 'irregular' but given a voice under the frame of reference of the dominant national culture. These final reflections about the Italian films' soundtracks require further consideration.

Through the intersections involving popular songs and a given cultural identity and its members, in the context of a dominant national culture, the songs and the cultural identity can gradually shape one another in ways that could produce lasting changes. For brevity, I will refer to a music or cultural identity that fits under the frame of reference of a given country's 'dominant national culture' as 'regular', while those perceived as being outside this frame of reference will be defined as 'irregular'. These are broad and not straightforward categorisations, but for now these terms can facilitate the concise drawing of a rough model to outline the results these textual processes can produce.

In the films where regular music defines a regular cultural identity or irregular music defines an irregular cultural identity, neither ideas about the music nor ideas about the cultural identity undergo substantial changes. However, where regular music defines an irregular cultural identity, music may construct the irregular cultural identity as regular, and the cultural identity may construct the regular music as irregular. Similarly, where irregular music defines a regular cultural identity, music may construct the regular cultural identity as irregular, and the cultural identity may construct the irregular music as regular. These basic remapping possibilities are not fixed nor are they straightforward processes. Other textual factors may disturb the audiovisual remapping these interactions can allow. However, where few other textual factors interfere, a remapping can occur and produce changes, shaping representations of a given culture and perceptions of a given music. *Jack Frusciante è uscito dal gruppo* may, after all, sneak its 'irregular' protagonist and his friends in the cinematic gallery of representations of a dominant national culture where their ilk are not usually represented sympathetically. His alternative small group outside 'the group' the title invokes reaches the end credits narratively contained, after being decimated and separated. Despite these final narrative 'punishments', their brief cinematic lives are small yet significant steps towards representations where the dominant national culture's Other would express its differences without being finally contained, obliterated, and decimated. The proximity between their 'irregular' culture and the Italian artists whose music defines their group, I argue, may aid the remapping process.

Interestingly, there are not any films among those I analysed in this thesis where irregular music defines and repositions a regular cultural identity in the frame

of reference of the dominant national culture. In the several films where regular music accompanies the regular cultural identity and irregular music accompanies the irregular cultural identity, the regular cultural identity remains unchanged, inside the dominant national culture, while the irregular cultural identity remains outside, despite temporarily looking and sounding like it is on the verge of carving a small space in the dominant national culture.

The analytical model I outline above is a loose framework for understanding how popular songs and cultural identities influence one another's representations in the textual field of a film. Which different textual factors intersect, influencing a potential remapping of cultural identities or songs, and how these intersections develop, are all questions requiring further answers, investigation, and testing, but hopefully these ideas can begin to provide a map for understanding these processes. While the ideas I elaborate about songs and cultural identities apply to Anglophone films – in this thesis as well as, potentially, other films – these arguments crucially developed through the analyses of non-Anglophone films in Chapters Three and Four. I believe proposing a textual analytical model through which compilation soundtracks enter our scholarly understanding of films as much as songs participate in our experiences as audiences can contribute to film studies as well as to studies of 'national' cinemas and audiovisual media. The ideas I put forward in this thesis regarding the cultural identities a soundtrack can 'play' in the cinematic representations of nations and the two-way audiovisual remapping model I propose can offer a wider understanding of a body of films disregarded by various branches of film studies. However, I believe these ideas could be effectively adapted to provide a new perspective on other films, other countries' cinematic outputs, and other historical periods where compilation soundtracks are found. While the textual objects I study are films, the ideas I propose could be adapted to apply to other audiovisual media where songs feature, informing the way other media 'play' identities through music.

In Chapter One, I named a section *Film (Music) Studies*. I at once emphasise and erase 'music', the first because it remains necessary to do so, and the second because ideally, one day, we will no longer need to emphasise it. The day film studies will have bridged the gap between its side of the river and the island film music studies still is, film studies will imply 'music'. For now, film music studies

remains the field where the project started and to which I would like to come home in order to offer a few ideas developed along the way.

I started by using Kassabian's concept about affiliating identifications as a basis for selecting the films and developing a wider understanding of those films through the loose identifications I thought their soundtracks would offer. While the coordinates Kassabian gives for finding films where these identifications occur have guided my work in the desired direction, along the way I have found instances where certain textual factors can tighten the loose array of possibilities offered by popular songs in films. I will offer some closing reflections about a few of these instances.

In a passage I discussed in Chapter One, Kassabian describes the differences between assimilating and affiliating identifications as being about 'direction' more than 'numbers', and concludes her explanation as follows: 'assimilating identifications narrow or tighten possibilities, while affiliating identifications open outward.' (2001, p. 141). Using the textual aspects Kassabian links to affiliating identifications as a guide I chose nine films that clearly offer a broad field of possibilities through their soundtracks. Nonetheless, other textual factors can, however partially, privilege a direction towards which audiences are pointed in their textual engagements with films. Popular songs can bring a large, and often not totally predictable, baggage of meaning accrued through their lives prior to featuring in the film's textual field. The 'looseness' affiliating identifications involve, their 'opening' effects, are a product of these unpredictable loads of meaning songs acquire via their pre-cinematic lives. The way songs enter and inhabit a film's textual field alongside the visuals, dialogue, and other non-musical paratextual presences means there are countless instances where all these different threads cross, composing the narrative fabric of a film. The unpredictable baggage songs bring, which meanings audiences recognise, how these are decoded in their narrative context – all these factors are responsible for the 'opening outward' Kassabian describes. However, a significant interaction between a musical piece and another textual element can emphasise one meaning among all the others the piece carries, narrowing the possibilities available for audiences' identifications.

Sometimes a meaning becomes fixed precisely through the process where non-place-bound identities are narratively constructed and given a place somewhere on the dominant national culture's map. The songs the twins are defined through in

Twin Town could be represented, in Fatty Lewis's words, as 'killing the Welsh choir music' as much as karaoke if someone in the film world presented those new English and Welsh pop bands as threatening. However, through the narrative connections between those who support Welsh choir music and the twins, the threats those songs could represent are defused and another meaning is activated. The visualisation Latin American songs undergo when women are present in *Barrio* can similarly limit the possibilities music can offer and privilege interpretations involving the three teenagers as the inhabitants of tropicalising subject positions, therefore restricting the narrative potential for Latin American songs. Latin American music could offer the three teenagers narrative materials for resisting their condition, but their essentialised ideas about Latin America and its women undermine possibilities for connections between disparate marginalities. In *Sono pazzo di Iris Blond*, when Romeo tells Iris she could write songs in English after mentioning how her poems are too 'explicit', singing in English becomes established as musical obedience to Romeo's patriarchal gesture of containment through censoring. Singing in English could carry a totally different meaning if Romeo did not limit these possibilities and narratively construct English as a means for censoring her sexuality. These moments when a narrative event activates one meaning among several possibilities, I would argue, are a key stage in the process whereby music is enabled to weave a specific cultural identity in the film's textual field.

As these instances demonstrate, other possibilities are not totally removed, but the options available through those songs' are reduced. I would like to propose a further partition to explain those instances where a narrative event restricts the possibilities affiliating identifications could offer. In Chapter Three, in the section about *Barrio*, I use the terms 'multidirectionality' to designate instances in which the possibilities for affiliating identifications are uncontained and 'unidirectionality' to designate instances in which these possibilities are contained through narrative processes whereby a given meaning songs bring becomes established as their principal meaning in the film. I offer these two terms as a conceptualisation of further differences I have noticed in those Kassabian terms affiliating identifications.

Finally, I would like to raise certain questions for further consideration by the disciplines the project straddles. As a film music scholar I have come to regard the countless times I write the words 'music does not enter the picture' with some

knowing irony and yet could not feel that I no longer needed to do so. While film studies' deafness remains the predictable complaint among those who write about films as audiovisual textual fields, the blindness I found between the lines in discussions about popular music in which songs' cinematic – and generally audiovisual – voyages are not accounted for calls for attention, too. Reading popular music scholarship as well as film scholarship has highlighted aspects of a century-old interaction between music, sound, and moving image whose extensive influence on every element passing through the textual field of a film or any other audiovisual narrative still remains uncharted. A musical piece's pre-cinematic meaning can bring something to a film's textual field. Through a similar process, whichever meaning 'grows' on the songs featuring in the film through their participation in the filmic narrative becomes another potential piece in the baggage songs carry outside the film after the end credits. These instances are a perfect example of a two-way audiovisual remapping producing changes in the perceptions of songs though their cinematic lives. The new meanings songs acquire through films are indelibly inscribed in the passports they carry through their journey.

Every day there are countless instances in which songs signify as a consequence of their audiovisually constructed baggage. For example, the way Simon and Garfunkel's 'Mrs. Robinson' had a brief radio revival in Northern Ireland after the affair involving Iris Robinson (the First Minister's wife) and a much younger man[62] shows how meaning narratively constructed through songs' cinematic lives remains in the baggage popular music accrues through the years. *The Independent*'s Ireland Correspondent, David McKittrick reports how '"Mrs Robinson" (chorus: "And here's to you, Mrs Robinson, Jesus loves you more than you will know"), […] has become the subject of frequent requests to Belfast radio stations from listeners who clearly find the whole affair irresistibly comical' (2010). These phenomena point towards the interesting potential effects of a musical piece's passage through a film's textual field, a textual journey still often disregarded by popular music studies.

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62 McKittrick, David (2010) 'Support drains from Robinson: Deafening silence among fellow DUP members angered by revelations about leader's wife'
http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/support-drains-from-robinson-1863898.html
[Accessed 9 September 2010]

Tracing how cultural identities are charted on the dominant national culture through films remains a fundamental undertaking and, given the rapid changes Britain, Spain, and Italy are presently going through, a hugely important one in the current climate. In the three countries the thesis addresses, divisions are growing and debates about whose culture is the dominant national culture are shaping ideas about who can claim a space on the map and who cannot. These debates and the countless conflicts between cultures that have plagued the 2000s require critical scholarship, sharp criticism, and alert audiences.

I hope my work will make an initial contribution to 'playing' compilation soundtracks into the study of films, showing how these audiovisual textual *milieux* are never clear representations of a national culture despite being routinely categorised using its borders. Without considering popular songs, the various cultural identities music articulates vis-à-vis the dominant national culture are disparate islands separated from national identity, and film music studies remains a small island between film studies and musicology. Considering how popular songs 'play' cultural identities onto the celluloid nations we inhabit and acquire meaning through their cinematic lives reveals textual connections waiting to be heard and seen, and would further exchanges between the film music studies islanders and those considering film and music from the two sides of the river. In the cultural sense, these allegorical islands are the cultural identities through which those who inhabit today's nations are defined as much as – possibly even more than – national identities. In the scholarly sense, the islands are the interdisciplinary space where film studies and musicology intersect, and where my project is based. If I have achieved my goal, every visitor to these islands will be hearing their cultural and scholarly origins differently.

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The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle (1980) Julien Temple

The Krays (1990) Peter Medak

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The Rocky Horror Picture Show (1975) Jim Sharman

The Stud (1978) Quentin Masters

The Supergrass (1985) Peter Richardson

The Tommy Steele Story (1957) Gerard Bryant

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